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ABSTRACT

Statistics bear out comments by concerned administrators that across the nation teachers are working in a state of fear, at times subjected to assaults, harassment, intimidation, and rape; and that unlawful and violent acts by students on campuses have occurred with so much more openness and defiance than in the past that the physical safety of individual students is in jeopardy. This report explores the causes of this breakdown in discipline and discusses conflicting viewpoints on what to do about the problem including whether or not corporal punishment should be permitted. The report also examines what courts have said about discipline. In discussing solutions to the problem, the report examines the use of drugs to control hyperactive children and provides guidelines for teachers and parents. (JF)

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EDUCATION U.S.A.
SPECIAL REPORT

DISCIPLINE

DISCIPLINE CRISIS IN SCHOOLS

THE PROBLEM, CAUSES AND SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS

EA 005 153

A Publication of the National School Public Relations Association

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DISCIPLINE CRISIS IN SCHOOLS

OVERVIEW

In San Francisco, Lee Dolson, past president of the city's Classroom Teachers Assn., charged bluntly that "teachers are in a state of fear. Hardly a week goes by that I don't talk to a teacher or two phoning from home, using sick leave to stay away because they are too sick with fear to go to school and teach." Charging "general permissiveness and a lack of control," as well as a "conspiracy of silence" on the part of school officials to play down the problem, Dolson added: "It's time society is held accountable for the destruction of the teaching profession."

Across the bay in Berkeley, Clifford Wong, principal of Berkeley High School, said "unlawful and violent acts by students on campus have occurred with so much more openness and defiance than in the past that the physical safety of individual students is in jeopardy."

Across the nation, Albert Shanker, president of New York City's United Federation of Teachers, fumed that "many teachers must work in a state of fear and be subjected to continuing assaults, harassment, intimidation and insults." Teachers in the city's schools "have been doused with lighter fluid and set afire; others were raped and many robbed," he told a Congressional subcommittee, "and there have been students so badly assaulted that they required plastic surgery." Across the East River, Long Island High School Principal Howard L. Hurwitz put it this way: "A quiet type of terror ...is driving supervisors and children out of the schools."

The statistics bear out these worried administrators. New York City, for example, recorded 541 attacks on teachers in 1972, almost double the 285 reported in 1971. Detroit teachers have been reporting an average of 25 assaults every month of the school year. "The result is that many teachers are afraid of their students and incapable of imposing the discipline needed for teaching," concluded the Feb. 19, 1973, issue of Time magazine.

Yet, the seemingly related problems of violence and discipline in the nation's schools is by no means a "city problem." As indicated by the returns to a survey conducted for this

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Special Report and detailed in the final chapter (p.61), school administrators in many communities outside the big cities share these and other problems that some critics attribute to "a breakdown in the enforcement of discipline." Examples of the problems administrators face or are prepared to meet can be surmised from the range of do's and don'ts contained in student codes of rights and responsibilities. Many detail due process procedures and disciplinary measures, for instance, for students who possess or use drugs on school grounds or at school events, assault another student or school staff member, commit an act of violence, or are considered "truants" or "incorrigibles."

This kind of deep concern with the behavior of schoolchildren throughout the country is by no means concentrated only among those connected with education. For the fourth straight year, the Annual Gallup Poll of Public Attitudes Toward Education showed an overriding dismay on the part of the public for discipline, or the lack of it, in the nation's classrooms. Although the public's concern with school discipline slipped slightly from first to third place in 1971, it rose to the top again in 1972, followed by finances and integration, respectively.

The unhappiness of the public, parents and teachers with the status of school discipline is shared equally by many administrators and school board members. In Dallas, where Supt. Nolan Estes is one of the strongest proponents for corporal punishment, four members of the school board were defeated for reelection in 1971 by candidates who advocated a tougher stand on discipline. In Philadelphia, Mark Shedd, charged with promulgating a policy of permissiveness, resigned as superintendent of schools at the request of a discipline-minded school board appointed by the new mayor, former law-and-order police chief Frank L. Rizzo.

And the whole issue of corporal punishment was kept smoldering, too. Battle lines were drawn sharply between those who want the right to whack a disruptive student's backside now and then, and those who want to ban the practice for good. Impetus for the organized movement to ban corporal punishment has come mainly from two sources: an NEA Task Force on Corporal Punish-

More Freedom V. More Restraint

Conservative thinkers hit the ceiling when behavioral psychologists Kenneth Clark and William Glasser, among others, argue for even further liberalization of education. One outspoken critic of the behaviorists, Vice Pres. Spiro Agnew, attacked the theories of those he refers to as "futuristic thinkers," calling Clark's theories "drivel."

Terming behavioral thinking such as B. F. Skinner's "potentially very dangerous...completely at odds with our basic belief in the dignity and worth of the individual," Agnew said: "I would think that restoration of discipline and order ought to be the first priority--even ahead of curriculum--in the schools of this country. It's a simple fact," he added, "that unless order is maintained there can be very little learning accomplished, no matter how modern or innovative the teaching techniques may be."

ment and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). These two groups then prompted the formation of the National Committee To Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools, as well as stimulating interest and support of citizens and parents who have been forming anti-corporal punishment groups. As reported by the NEA News Service in February 1973, some 60 anti-corporal punishment groups were "developing strategy to help parents organize local campaigns."

In a strongly worded recommendation contained in its report, the NEA Task Force said physical punishment should be phased out of education completely during the 1972-73 school year. "The task force believes that teachers and other school personnel abhor physical violence of persons toward each other, no matter what the form--alley fights, gang warfare, repression by law enforcement agencies, or war between nations."

M. Chester Nolte, chairman of the U. of Denver's Dept. of Educational Administration, noted in an interview for this Education U.S.A. Special Report that an important case, brought by a mother on behalf of her child, could provide the "crack" in a school's right to administer corporal punishment. A federal district judge ruled in Glaser v. Marietta in November 1972 that school officials have the right to administer reasonable corporal punishment but that parents have the right to veto the use of such punishment as to their own children. The court said: "If the parent is unwilling to grant the school the right to paddle his child, then he must be prepared to take the steps necessary to effectively discipline his errant child himself. The parent must actively, promptly, and effectively assert his authority so that the other children will not be disorganized. As always, with rights goes responsibility."

Professor Nolte said the ruling raises some unanswered questions: "If the parent fails to live up to the court's expectation, can the principal go into court and file a complaint that the parent is not living up to his end of the bargain? How will the court enforce its edict? If the school must eternally prove its need to administer corporal punishment without due process of law, then what substitute do we have for corporal punishment which will prove effective as its replacement?"

The courts and legal agencies are deeply involved, too, in the struggle over school discipline. While the public cries for more restraint on the disruptive tactics of children in the schools, the courts continue to uphold full rights of students to protection under the U.S. Constitution.

The Supreme Court has said students facing serious disciplinary action, such as extended suspension or expulsion, must have the right to counsel, the right to face their accusers and the right to cross-examine them. And it has ruled that students have the right to disobey school district regulations if these regulations violate such rights as free speech and protection from arbitrary prosecution guaranteed by the Constitution. A high school student is a citizen of the United States, the Supreme Court says, and he has the same rights to protection under the law as an adult.

So, as rival factions continue to fire volleys of invective at each other over the do's and don'ts of discipline, educators stand squarely in the middle, with a mandate in their hands to properly educate the 50 million youngsters in the nation's schools.

THE WHY'S: WHO'S TO BLAME

Why? Why this terrible problem with discipline in the schools? What happened to the tough old schoolmarm with that stern, perhaps even intimidating look on her face, presiding firmly and forcefully over her classroom? And what happened to yesteryear's students who sat with eyes straight ahead, erect in their seats, memorizing everything in sight and scarcely daring to breathe at the wrong time, much less talk out of turn?

Why are we suddenly faced with this problem of immense proportions--this rapidly escalating problem that seemingly defies solution, that turns teachers prematurely gray, tests the stamina of principals and confounds parents?

Why, Why, Why?

The reasons are many. But some critics claim the main one may be the schools themselves, as they cling desperately to memories of yesterday while a kaleidoscopic, nuclear, technological world of tomorrow dawns all about them.

Thomas Shaheen, former superintendent of schools in San Francisco, is one of those critics. "Our schools," he said, "are organized on a semi-prison approach. We have a lack of trust, sign-in and sign-out slips, detention systems, wardens and jailers, fear of escape, regimentation, limited opportunities for choice, barricaded or locked toilets, cell-like classrooms. Why are we surprised that some youngsters rebel?"

Louis Hay, assistant director of clinical guidance programs in the New York City Schools, agrees. "Teachers and children," he said, "face oversized classes that are endlessly self-defeating, particularly in the face of an unprecedented need of individual child-adult relationship and teaching." Problems are complicated by a "lack of ancillary services, uncovered classes, materials not fully relevant nor in appropriate abundance, mobility of teaching staff, oversaturated buildings too large for social comfort and insufficient internship training for the staff," he added. The result is that "these critical deficits of minimally adequate educational facilities precipitate mutual abrasiveness between frustrated teachers and traumatized, disorderly pupils. They are locked together in a self-defeating context of suspicion, hostility and hurt," Hay said.

Charles Silberman commented on the inadequate treatment of students in Crisis in the Classroom: "By and large," Silberman contended, "students are expected to learn what the faculty wants them to learn in the way the faculty wants them to learn it, and no nonsense, please. Freedom to explore, to test

one's ideas as a means of finding out who one is and what one believes--these are luxuries a well run school cannot afford. The result, at best," he said, "is to persuade students that knowledge has no relation to them, no relevance for the kinds of lives they will lead; at worst, it produces...alienation, the rejection of authority, the rejection of the whole notion of culture, of discipline and of learning...."

Do Teachers Contribute to Discipline Problems?

Teachers take it on the chin when researchers and educators begin probing for answers to the discipline problem. Laurel Tanner, associate professor of curriculum and instruction at Temple U.'s College of Education, said:

> Look at our schools. In how many ways do teachers help to create aggressive and hostile behavior? By the mechanism of failure, by sarcasm and physical punishment, we almost force children into more aggression and hatred. Teachers need to learn to use reason and affection...instead of coercion and hatred.

Lest some educators look askance at this kind of criticism from the college level, there is an abundance of it from the secondary school level, too. And one of the most outspoken of these critics is J. Lloyd Trump, associate secretary of the National Assn. of Secondary School Principals:

> Those teachers who do the most complaining about discipline in their classrooms are often those who talk endlessly, who dwell on the irrelevant and who bore their students beyond description. It's no wonder that kids get angry and restless.

Many alibis are offered, according to Trump. "Sometimes they'll blame it on TV violence. At other times they'll attack the lax dress codes in the schools." Disciplinary problems "will always plague the teacher who expects every student to sit placidly in his seat--quiet, docile and unquestioning--while he lectures them for 25 minutes," he added.

Another act of the teaching profession--the strike--is also blamed by some as a catalyst of student disruption. Such was one of the findings of the New York State Temporary Commission To Study the Causes of Student Unrest. The commission stated in a 1971 report, Anarchy in the Academy, that teachers who strike and parents who use the schools as a "battleground for factional disputes" inspire rebellion by youth. "Strikes by teachers and the closing of schools by parents," the commission said, "have been a most disruptive and harmful influence on the minds of students...who must conclude that force, legal or otherwise, is the accepted method to gain demands."

Are Parents Chiefly To Blame?

Perhaps it is the parent who is criticized most for the breakdown of discipline and respect for authority in America today. According to the Council for Basic Education (CBE): "In many metropolitan high schools and junior high schools, the staffs have almost lost control because they know

discipline will not be backed up by parents. And in the affluent middle-class suburbs, parents may do more hand-wringing about the situation than do ghetto parents. The defiance of authority by the kids may be more sedate, but the problem is there all the same."

Many adults "seem to think that the conduct of young people is simply willful insubordination, unrelated to their background and upbringing, but surely the children's teeth are set on edge by the sour grapes their fathers have munched on. The anarchistic attitude of the young stems from adult failure, especially adult failure to assert authority, and not from some congenital defect within the young," CBE said.

This generation "has found that parents...feel incapable of dealing with the strife that sometimes comes with saying 'No,'" CBE's June 1969 Bulletin said. "So Johnny gets the car tonight instead of doing his homework. Suzy gets the $300 electric guitar that Dad can't afford, and the university administration grants amnesty to the students who rifled the dean's files and scrawled four-letter words on his office walls." But that is not even the worst of it, the Bulletin charged. "If some parents are too passive and lack the character to assert reasonable authority, there are other parents who actively encourage defiance of authority...."

Youth Against Authority in Any Form?

Yet, all the critics aren't convinced that adults should bear that much responsibility for the current situation. James C. Dobson Jr., assistant professor of pediatrics at the U. of Southern California School of Medicine, contended in his provocative book, Dare To Discipline: "It should now be apparent to everyone that we are in the midst of a very serious worldwide revolution. This cataclysmic social upheaval is being ignited and fueled by the young--the students--the 'under thirty' populace."

Agreeing that parents and the schools have helped fuel this upheaval, Dobson nevertheless pointed out the growing militancy and solidarity of the youth movement against authority. "Whether it be in Tokyo, Paris, London, or on the campuses of American universities, these antagonists are united in their opposition to...authority in all its forms," he said.

"Every institution of authority is now being challenged: the police, the military, the church, the family, the courts, the high schools, the universities, the FBI, the CIA, and the mores and values of society itself. No young person wants to be 'told' anything by his superiors--assuming that he recognizes his superiors at all. This hostility in the new generation reaches its peak in the minority of young revolutionaries who want to burn and to destroy the holdings of the establishment. They have no program of reform; their platform includes nothing but universal destruction--in the vain hope that something better will follow," Dobson contended.

Looking at the same situation from a more dispassionate angle, Kenneth L. Fish, principal of Northwestern Community High School in Flint, Mich., said: "There are more youth, proportionately, in our country's population today than ever before: their voice has more impact as it demands to be heard.

"Young people have more leisure to read, think, talk and pursue their own particular values than ever before," Fish said. "Few jobs are available to them, either in society or at home." Youth have also become a billion dollar market through television and "are wooed by advertisers who appeal to their sense of beauty, power, and the rightness of their feelings," Fish said. And the teen-ager "isolates himself from the rest of the family more than ever before, often having his own room, his own television set, his own telephone, and his own car. With the voice and values of youth coming on strong," Fish contended, "the voice of adults in our society is relatively divided, uncertain and muted, as they invoke the past, lament the future and worry about the economy, ecology and the youth culture." The adults' "wistful strivings for middle-class values are largely lost among the powerful and 'together' rhetoric of youth as it deprecates the Establishment, demands fuller rights, and celebrates humanism and the Age of Aquarius," he said.

Other Contributing Causes of Discipline Problems

While most researchers dwell on the "big four" reasons for discipline problems in the schools--the schools themselves, teachers, parents and the youth culture of today--many other reasons are also cited. One that finds a place on most of the lists is the lack of a clear-cut code of student behavior, outlining what will be accepted and what simply won't be tolerated in any given school. As Fish put it:

"Just as the communications of traffic regulations to the public, through drivers manuals and road signs, is important, school regulations should be clearly and forcefully communicated. Too often," Fish said, "the principal publishes school rules only as a crisis measure. For instance, after a riot breaks out, the police are called in and school is closed for the week. Why wait for a crisis to declare school rules?" Fish asked.

Games Teachers and Students Play

The controversy over rules obviously has two sides. One side contends rules must be spelled out and enforced. The other side maintains that trying to enforce too many meaningless rules only invites trouble. "The game of 'ambiguous rules,' for example, is a common cause of classroom disturbance," according to Leslie J. Chamberlain and Morris Weinberger, two professors at Bowling Green State U.

Teachers and students spend hours playing the games and refining them, while education is ignored, the two professors say. For example, "In 'How Wide Is an Aisle,' the students' team scores whenever there is a foot in the aisle without reprimand, and the teacher 'scores' when he catches someone. Similar games are 'But You've Been to the Bathroom' (a game more often won by students) and 'When Is a Pencil Dull?' (a game the teacher usually wins). Too often, teachers perpetuate rules without knowing why they do so, what purpose the rules serve or what the total effect is on either the class as a whole or an individual student," said the professors in an article in Instructor magazine.

Following are some oft-cited causes of discipline problems:

Race Relations: Strained race relations in society as a whole consistently spill over into the schools, many times causing disturbances, riots, school closings and bad feelings for weeks and months at a time. It is here, critics contend, that schools must take positive steps and generate the kinds of human relations programs that will overcome in the school the racial problems that have yet to be solved in the community.

School Size: Still another problem is the burgeoning size of high schools, particularly in the inner cities. At a special meeting of the National Assn. of Secondary School Principals in Washington, D.C., one principal called his 4,000-pupil school a "monstrosity." Said another principal: "There is something about largeness that attracts problems, yet we continue to build larger and larger high schools." One of the primary problems of largeness, the principals agreed, is communications. The larger the school, the fewer the communications between principal, faculty and students. The principal in a large high school, they said, becomes more like the chairman of the board of a large, impersonal corporation than the educational leader responsible for the instruction of each and every student in the school.

Laws Affecting Youth: Other problems stem from events far from the control of schools. New York U. Prof. Irving Kristol contends that two of the major factors contributing to the breakdown of discipline in ghetto schools have been the increase in the legal age for leaving school following World War II and the increase in the minimum wage. "Together, these reforms insured that a great many vigorous and robust young men and women, with no academic aptitude or interests, were sentenced to confinement in the schools," Kristol said.

"The results are not very different from dropping a gang of juveniles in a children's playpen. They proceed to wreck the place and make everyone miserable," he added. Kristol, co-editor of Public Interest magazine, said lack of discipline in ghetto schools, "which prevents almost any learning from going on," is a new problem "only because the undisciplined student is now in school, whereas he used to work at some casual, low-paying job or, at any rate, committed his acts of juvenile delinquency outside the school rather than within it. To say, as many do, that our schools 'have failed to cope' with these young men and women," Kristol contended, "is to say the absurd. They never did cope, they never knew how to cope, and they are utterly impotent to cope with these young people. It is convenient for us to dodge our responsibility by blaming the schools, but it is really neither honest nor useful for us to do so," he concluded.

And there are other reasons. Gangs, the declining role of the churches, and the decisions of high courts in cases involving students' rights all affect school discipline, or the lack of it. The causes of the breakdown of discipline in the nation's schools are many and complex. And many of them are rooted deeply in the problems of contemporary society over which the schools have no control, many critics say.

DISCIPLINE: PUTTING IT IN PERSPECTIVE

When the troubled educator seeks answers to the complex questions concerning discipline in the schools today, one of the first things he finds is that a not-so-subtle war is being waged between two camps with decidedly different approaches to solving the problem. The battle is between those who believe the answer lies in the return to some good, old-fashioned law and order in the classroom, and those who contend that more, not less, student freedom is the ultimate answer to better behavior in schools.

The literature is voluminous. The arguments on both sides are compelling. The problem is determining who is right and who is wrong, or determining that a middle ground exists. This question must be determined before any educator tries to develop and put into practice a solid policy on discipline.

The Case for Less Discipline

One of the most outspoken and widely read proponents of promoting better behavior through liberalizing and humanizing the educational process is author Charles Silberman. In looking at the reasons why schools fail and students rebel, Silberman bluntly contended that "secondary schools tend to be even more authoritarian and repressive than elementary schools; the values they transmit are the values of docility, passivity, conformity and lack of trust." And the junior high school, Silberman said, "is, by almost unanimous agreement, the wasteland--one is tempted to say cesspool--of American education."

One of the principal solutions, he said, is the "conviction that schools can be more humane, that students can handle and benefit from greater freedom and responsibility." And part of this freedom should be in the area of "arbitrary or demeaning rules and regulations" contained in codes concerning dress and appearance--codes "which usually are as inane as they are unenforceable," Silberman said. Such codes, he added, are "invasions of the students' privacy" and "exercises in arbitrary power."

Silberman also called for "somewhat bolder attempts to humanize the schools as a whole." The examples he cited include cutting the number of required classes, leaving students with one-third or more of their time unscheduled "to be used for independent study, for taking more elective courses, for fulfilling some course requirements outside the classroom, or for relaxation and leisure. Like it or not," he said, "more and more high schools are going to have to make more and more changes," either voluntarily or by legal mandate as court after court upholds students' rights under the Four-

teenth Amendment. As a matter of fact, Silberman said, "school officials who have freedom forced upon them may discover that it is a better solvent of disorder than repression. Certainly it is clear that repression does not work--that 'cracking down' serves only to breed more defiance and disruption, which breeds more repression, and so on ad infinitum. And all the more so when 'cracking down' is accompanied by the kind of arbitrariness, racial prejudice, assumption of student guilt, and general disregard of individual rights that characterize 'difficult' schools."

"Since repression fails anyway," he added, "it may be worthwhile to try freedom. There is evidence that it can work--evidence that even 'difficult' and 'disruptive' students can respond to an atmosphere of trust. Educators must recognize that a freer and more humane atmosphere is educationally sound as well as constitutionally necessary."

The Case for More Discipline

Yet, others say too much student freedom is at the very base of the problem of discipline in the schools. The Council for Basic Education contended in an issue of its Bulletin that "the assertion of authority is not an adult conspiracy against children. It is part of the moral responsibility one generation owes to another."

James Dobson couldn't agree more. In Dare To Discipline, he said: "Much has been written about the dangers of harsh, oppressive, unloving discipline; these warnings are valid and should be heeded. However, the consequences of excessive punishment have been cited as justification for the elimination of discipline. That is foolish.

"The term 'discipline,'" Dobson said, "is not limited to the context of punishment. Children need to be taught self-discipline and responsible behavior. They need assistance in learning how to face the challenges and obligations of living. They must learn the art of self-control. We must not depend on hope and luck to fashion the critical attitudes we value in our children," Dobson said. "That unstructured technique was applied during the childhood of the generation which is now in college, and the outcome has been quite discouraging. Permissiveness...has been a disaster."

And the nation's schools, Dobson charged, rank right behind parents as a major factor in the breakdown of discipline: "Parents gave their children a distorted view of authority and the school glibly seconded the motion." If this "trend toward social chaos" is to be turned around, he said, "educators must cooperate with parents in bringing about a revival of effective discipline in the classroom."

But, Dobson charged, there's a long road ahead. "The degree of student control exercised by school authorities has never been so minimal as it is today in America," he said, charging that "academic discipline lies at the point of death in the nation's schools."

Yet, he said, "if one examines the secret behind a championship football team, a magnificent orchestra or a successful business, the principal in-

gredient is invariably discipline.... How inaccurate is the belief that self-control is maximized in an environment which places no obligations on its children? How foolish is the assumption that self-discipline is a product of self-indulgence?"

Another psychologist, Daniel J. O'Neill, looks at the problem in much the same way. O'Neill, professor of psychology at Rhode Island Junior College, said that, in theory, permissiveness looks good, but in practice it just doesn't work.

The word "permissive," he said, "is defined by the dictionary as 'being allowed greater freedom.'" And from this definition, he says, "permissiveness would seem to be most desirable, particularly in a democratic society." Thus, he adds, "it isn't surprising to find public education, under the guidance and direction of permissive-oriented school administrators, placing greater emphasis on the individual student's needs for self-expression and freedom."

Parents, too, have a reason to go along with this approach, O'Neill said. "Many of the parents of today's schoolchildren can recall the drab schoolroom where rote learning occupied a good part of the daily lesson. A great many potentially good students were the victims of this oppressive and negative approach to education." With this in mind, O'Neill said, it's easy to see why so many parents have given support "to an educational philosophy which runs counter to what they, as students, had experienced.

"But," he added, "one may well question the extreme degree to which the pendulum has swung in the other direction." It appears "that man has difficulty reaching any balance or happy medium in his approach to social problems, whether it be the enforcement of law and order, the recognition and protection of the rights of minority groups, or the education of our children," he said.

Unfortunately, O'Neill contended, the pendulum has swung in many cases to a destructive degree in the opposite direction, creating an environment in which "a student is free to vent his emotions upon anyone or everything, free to disrupt a class in session, free to show open defiance for any and all authority." And this kind of freedom, he said, "leads down the road to anarchy. Permissive education not only fails to meet the crucial needs of children, but also becomes a catalyst for their more intense reaction against any and all forms of authority." Educators must "seriously consider the amount of learning that can occur in a chaotic, unstructured environment, compared to an orderly, organized classroom," he concluded.

And while psychologists are theorizing, principals--out on the firing line--are facing the problem nose-to-nose, in many instances with a get-tough ultimatum from their own staffs. One such ultimatum was delivered by the staff of Richmond Hill High School in Queens, N.Y., to principal Murray Stoopack, after an English teacher had been attacked by two teen-agers.

The teachers demanded at a faculty meeting to know what the principal was going to do about disruptive students. According to a report in The New York Times, Stoopack replied: "I have in mind the guidance approach." The faculty groaned. "I can suspend and I will suspend," Stoopack said, "but

our job is to educate basically and not punish." More groans. Then an excited woman teacher demanded: "I want protection."

"Think carefully before you turn the high school into an armed camp," the principal cautioned. With that, one teacher had had enough. He said forcefully: "It's not a guidance problem. Let's make it a punishment problem. Make arrests. Knock heads. Get rid of the garbage. We've got to be tough because these kids are tough. You can't mollycoddle kids taught by their culture and background to hate you. Let's stand up to this." The teachers applauded.

The Middle Ground: 'Reasonable Authority'

Yet, despite the emotion that the question of discipline carries constantly with it, many agree that there is a middle ground consisting of a carefully and considerately applied program of discipline in the schools. Principal Kenneth Fish of the Northwestern Community High School, Flint, Mich., called for "the assertion of reasonable authority in the schools," adding quickly that "I am suggesting something much more complex than lowering the boom."

George Triezenberg, principal of Eisenhower High School, Blue Island, Ill., a suburb of Chicago, put it this way: "No organization or group of people can function effectively without internal discipline. Guidelines must govern the movement and activities of individual members of the group so that the individual and the group can achieve established objectives and serve common purposes.

"Consider the plight of a motorist," Triezenberg said, "attempting to drive any distance on a modern expressway without recognition of and compliance with accepted traffic regulations. Suppose each motorist acted solely upon his own conscience, impulse and feeling. We shudder at the consequences of such action.

"We all recognize that the end result of lack of discipline would be chaos in the home, chaos on the athletic field and chaos on the road. It should be equally obvious," Triezenberg concluded, "that neither can a school function without discipline. Discipline is the one indispensable means for achieving educational objectives of the organization."

So today's educator is faced with maintaining a delicate balance between too little and too much discipline, between the obvious need for authority in the schools and contemporary society's trend toward less authority in the home and community, and between the adult cry for law and order and the student cry for greater autonomy.

The educator must try to put these conflicting views into perspective and then build, from the ground up, a solid but fair program of discipline--one that will not only keep the troublemakers in line, but give all students enough latitude to develop into satisfied, well rounded individuals.

The question, of course, is how.

DISCIPLINE AND THE COURTS

When Gerald Gault, a 15-year-old Arizona schoolboy, reached for the telephone one day back in 1965, he little realized that he was about to set in motion perhaps the most dramatic legal upheaval in discipline procedures in the history of American public education. He called a housewife in a nearby town and allegedly made what were judged to be obscene remarks. Justice was swift. The 15-year-old, without a lawyer, with no testimony from the housewife, no hearing transcript and no avenue of appeal, was sentenced to six years in a reform school. It was all perfectly legal. The judicial system had never afforded juveniles the same rights of procedural due process it had long guaranteed to adults. But in action that was destined to reverse juvenile court history, the Gault case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The high court's language was direct and sweeping. "It would indeed be surprising if the privilege against self-incrimination were available to hardened criminals but not to children.... Whatever may be their precise impact, neither the Fourteenth Amendment nor the Bill of Rights is for adults alone." This historic decision guaranteed juveniles in court the right to notice of charges, the right to counsel, the right of confrontation and cross-examination of witnesses, the privilege against self-incrimination, the right to a transcript, and the right to appellate review.

Furthermore, the court said, such rights are guaranteed "in any proceeding, be it civil or criminal, administrative or judicial, investigatory or adjudicatory." And it wasn't too long before the full impact of this sweeping indictment of judicial treatment of the juvenile literally descended on the nation's heretofore legally sacrosanct public schools like a bombshell.

Previously, the Supreme Court ruled in the 1943 Barnette case in West Virginia that compelling a student to salute the flag and recite the pledge of allegiance "transcends the constitutional limitations on the power of local authorities." In essence, the court said that individual liberty must transcend the right of the state to control the mind of its citizens unless there is a clear and present danger to the state.

In Loco Parentis

Generally, courts throughout the land had ruled since the turn of the century that the schoolmaster stood "in loco parentis"--in the place of the parent. They thereby could generally exercise in the classroom the same authority a parent would exercise in the home. The decision commonly referred to was one by the Wisconsin Supreme Court, which had ruled:

> While the principal...in charge of a public school is subordinate to the school board...and must enforce rules and regulations adopted by the board for the government of the school...he does not derive all his power and authority in the school and over his pupils from the affirmative action of the board. He stands for the time being in loco parentis to his pupils and because of that relation he must necessarily exercise authority over them in many things concerning which the board may have remained silent.
>
> In the school, as in the family, there exists on the part of the pupils the obligations of obedience to lawful commands, subordination, civil deportment, respect for the rights of other pupils and fidelity to duty. These obligations are inherent in any proper school system and constitute, so to speak, the common law of the school. Every pupil is presumed to know the law and is subject to it whether it has or has not been enacted by the district board in the form of written rules and regulations. Indeed it would seem impossible to form rules which would cover all cases of insubordination and all acts of vicious tendency which the teacher is liable to encounter daily and hourly.

Time and again for more than 60 years, courts cited these passages in refusing to overrule school authorities in the adjudication of school regulations. In effect, the courts ruled, the U.S. Constitution was replaced by the doctrine of in loco parentis at the schoolhouse door, i.e., the teacher in the classroom generally had the authority of the parent in the home. But in the mid-1960s, civil libertarians switched their attack from the state to the federal courts. The outcome was dramatic.

The state courts, in upholding the doctrine of in loco parentis, had focused their attention on the power and the responsibility of school authorities generally to do as they pleased to maintain strict discipline in the schools and to carry out the state-mandated function of public education. The federal courts, on the other hand, began to examine the issues as they affected the constitutional rights of the individual student.

Tinker: An Emerging Liberalization

And just as Gault was the first shoe dropped by the Supreme Court, Tinker was the second. The case involved a group of junior high and high school students who came to school in Des Moines, Iowa, wearing black armbands to mourn the Vietnamese war dead and to protest the continued support of the war by the United States. They were told by school officials that if they returned with the armbands the next day they would be suspended from school. They did and they were suspended.

Parents of the children fought the suspensions right up to the Supreme Court and, in 1969, the court delivered a legal blow that still reverberates in high schools throughout the land. Thomas W. George, former staff counsel to the National Assn. of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), called the Tinker case the one that "most revolutionized law in the secondary schools." The decision of the court read:

> In our system, state-operated schools may not be enclaves of totalitarianism. School officials do not possess authority over their students. Students in school as well as out of school are "persons" under our Constitution. They are possessed of fundamental rights which the state must respect, just as they themselves must respect their obligations to the state. In our system, students may not be regarded as closed-circuit recipients of only that which the state chooses to communicate.
>
> They may not be confined to the expression of those sentiments that are officially approved. In the absence of a specific showing of constitutionally valid reasons to regulate their speech, students are entitled to freedom of expression of their views.
>
> In our system, undifferentiated fear or apprehension of disturbance is not enough to overcome the right to freedom of expression. Any departure from absolute regimentation may cause trouble. Any variation from the majority's opinion may inspire fear. Any words spoken, in class, in the lunchroom, or on the campus, that deviate from the views of another person may start an argument or cause a disturbance. But our Constitution says we must take that risk.
>
> To justify prohibition of a particular expression of opinion in the schools there must be something more than a mere desire to avoid the discomfort and unpleasantness that accompanies an unpopular viewpoint. Where there is no finding or showing that engaging in the forbidden conduct would materially and substantially interfere with requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the schools, the prohibition cannot be sustained.
>
> (Neither) students nor teachers shed their constitutional rights at the schoolhouse gate.

In effect, the U.S. Constitution and with it all the procedural due process implied in the Gault decision had finally made it through the schoolhouse door. The black armbands, the court held, were merely expressions of the students' views on the war, and the suspensions were declared in violation of the students' constitutional rights. Here the court clearly ruled that when conflicts exist between individual rights and school regulations, the latter will be supported only where it can be clearly shown that the rule is absolutely necessary for the orderly functioning of the school.

How Far Does 'Due Process' Go?

Despite bringing due process into the schoolroom, the courts, as yet, have shown no tendency to give the student the right to actually disrupt the education of his peers. Although the Tinker decision forbids schools from cracking down unless there is "responsible apprehension" about the outcome of the demonstration, courts generally have upheld school districts' rights to take quick, affirmative action when disturbances actually do result. To illustrate: two similar cases decided by the same court on the same day had

decidedly different outcomes. Both involved the wearing of protest buttons; both were decided by the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals two years prior to the Tinker decision. In one, Burnside v. Byars, which the Supreme Court was to cite later in its Tinker decision, the circuit court upheld students' right to wear buttons with a freedom slogan on them primarily because no disruptive conduct had been shown. In the other, Blackwell v. Issaquena County Board of Education, the same court upheld the right of the school board to ban buttons because they had caused violence and disruption.

Another case, Barker v. Hardaway, which went from a U.S. District Court in West Virginia through the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals and on to the Supreme Court, involved the suspension by a high school principal of participants in a disorderly demonstration at a football game. The principal suspended the students without notice, without a hearing and without counsel. The courts, all the way up to the Supreme Court--which declined to review the lower court decisions--refused to grant relief to the students.

Yet, a U.S. District Court in South Carolina, in Hammond v. South Carolina State College, granted students an injunction against enforcement of a college rule banning parades of students without prior authority. The court held that such a rule was unreasonable prior restraint on freedom of expression.

And in perhaps one of the most clearly worded decisions on this matter, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals held in Esteban v. Central Missouri State College that the first amendment does not protect "actual or potentially disruptive conduct, aggressive action, disorder and disturbance, and acts of violence and participation therein...." Again, review was denied by the Supreme Court.

A pattern emerges wherein demonstrations immediately involved with violence and disruption have been forbidden by the courts, and demonstrations conducted in an orderly and nonviolent manner have been construed as entirely legal and constitutionally protected exercises of freedom of expression. Many demonstrations have been banned, however, because the classtime that would have been missed by participating students was considered prima facie "disruption" of the educational process, according to Thomas George.

Yet, many school administrators and some lawyers question how the courts expect the principal or the superintendent of schools to be able to apply the powers of clairvoyance. L. Harold Levinson, associate professor of law at the U of Florida School of Law, likens the Supreme Court to a "Monday morning quarterback" second guessing "last Saturday's plays."

"The Warren Court did many magnificent jobs in my opinion," he said, "but it certainly did not have divine perfection, and the Tinker case would have been more significant if the court had explained how a school administrator is supposed to anticipate whether or not violence or disruption is likely to occur from a manifestation of student conduct." For that matter, not all the Supreme Court justices were happy with the Tinker decision either. Justice Black said in a blistering dissenting opinion:

> School officials should be accorded the widest authority in maintaining discipline and good order in their institutions. To

translate this proposition into a workable constitution rule, I would, in cases like this, cast upon those complaining the burden of showing a particular school measure was motivated by other than legitimate school concerns.

The court's holding in this case ushers in what I deem to be an entirely new era in which the power to control pupils by the... officials of state-supported public schools in the United States is in ultimate effect transferred to the Supreme Court.

One does not need to be a prophet...to know that after the court's holding today...some students in Iowa schools and indeed in all schools will be ready, able and willing to defy their teachers on practically all order.

Due Process: Suspension and Expulsion

Nevertheless, despite dissenting opinions in high places and the laments of teachers, administrators and school district attorneys, due process has found its way firmly into the schoolhouse. And whether or not it is the result of Monday morning quarterbacking, the process of suspending or expelling students for more than three to five days has become a whole new ballgame.

According to Thomas George: "Nothing in our recent national experience has so clearly tested the capacity of our educational institutions to respond to the new requirements of a free society than the confrontations and new laws resulting from student lawsuits against high schools and their principals." Yet, he says, principals must face the reality that "the history of freedom is the history of due process of law.

"Due process in the area of student suspension and expulsion," George said, "applies categorically across the board." Court decisions, he said, have dramatically changed what used to be a student's privilege of attending school into "an extremely valuable right, not lightly taken away." And the students' new court-mandated rights, particularly in the matters of suspension and expulsion, he added, "may not arbitrarily be precluded."

Just what these rights consist of is spelled out clearly by Robert L. Ackerly in The Reasonable Exercise of Authority, published by NASSP. The publication says:

Serious breaches of discipline or an accumulation of minor breaches must be handled with due process. Because it is now well established that students enjoy the protection of the Fourteenth Amendment, a number of procedural matters must be considered. Rules governing hearings should be formulated by the faculty and the student government representatives and should be published.

A notice of the time and place of the hearing and of the exact nature of the charge must be given to the student a reasonable time in advance. The hearing might be held by a panel. For example, two students and two faculty members could be selected by

lot, and a fifth member be appointed by the principal. Student panelists selected by the school administration are not usually respected by the student body. Selecting a panel by lot approaches the jury system and should obviate charges of discrimination. In all cases the accused must be allowed to be represented by someone of his own choosing. The hearing may be informal, though it need not be open; and the accused must be allowed to cross-examine witnesses and to present witnesses in his own behalf.

The student's parents or guardian may attend. The panel should be instructed to make findings of fact and submit these together with its recommendations to the principal promptly after the close of the hearing. The principal and, subsequently, the board of education should be guided by the report and the practical recommendations of the panel. Also, if the accused believes he was not accorded a fair hearing, he must be allowed to appeal on this ground; any other plan of action may result in school authorities being brought into court.

Suspension Without a Hearing: 3 to 5 Day Maximum

Generally, courts throughout the country have set limits of from three to five days as the maximum time students may be suspended without being afforded the right of a hearing. And even then, courts have usually held that such a suspension must be for some very serious breach of the rules or to prevent violence or disruption. One such case involved the Lee County (La.) Board of Education's 10-day suspension, without a hearing, of 100 junior high school students involved in a mass protest demonstration. The Fifth Circuit Court upheld the school board's right to do so.

"There may be situations, such as when the school is in the throes of a violent upheaval," the circuit court said, "which would warrant removal of a student from the premises of the institution without a hearing." The court then added forcefully: "We here amplify this suggestion by affirming that where the presence of a disruptive student or group of students interferes with the orderly discharge of normal school functions...such student or group disruption can be ended forthwith by immediate ejectment."

Yet, even the short-term suspension without due process is under attack by civil liberties lawyers. One such attorney, who argues against almost any kind of suspension without procedural due process, is Patricia Lines of Harvard's Center for Law and Education. "The real issue in all these cases," she says, "is the legality of a punishment which denies students a precious and valuable right--the right to attend school--without first granting them a hearing where they can contest the charges against them. The length of the suspension should not, in any way, affect the student's right to procedural due process." To prove her point, Ms. Lines quotes from the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision in which Chief Justice Warren wrote:

> Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments. Compulsory school attendance laws and the great expenditures for education both demonstrate our recognition

> of the importance of education to our democratic society. It is required in the performance of our most basic public responsibilities, even service in the armed forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship. Today, it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education....

Ms. Lines quotes further from a U.S. District Court opinion in Texas, where the court, ruling in Sullivan v. Houston Independent School District, held that education "is a priceless commodity," adding: "Just as the Supreme Court has declared that United States citizenship cannot be revoked except by voluntary expatriation...so courts should declare that an individual's guarantee of an education, only quantitatively less basic than the right of citizenship, cannot be annulled, even temporarily, except in the most extreme circumstances."

The attorney admits that "occasions exist when removal from classes, or from the school, may be an appropriate measure for dealing with an emergency situation." These situations would include restoring order after a serious disruption or removing a "clearly dangerous" student. School officials, she agrees, "have an obligation to avoid a clear and present danger to the school, students and teachers, and to prevent serious and prolonged disruptions of the educational process."

However, Ms. Lines contends, "these circumstances do not exist in the run-of-the-mill school suspension situation." And "an emergency suspension which lasts beyond a minimal 'cooling-off period'" of perhaps a few hours or a day, she says, "should be treated as a disciplinary reprisal by school authorities and should be preceded by notice and hearing. All that is asked," she says, "is that school authorities take steps to assure that the charges underlying the disciplinary action are true, and the action appropriate."

Yet, she says, courts so far have upheld summary suspensions of up to 15 days. "This kind of analysis is faulty," she charges, "for if a right to education exists, it exists every day a young person is entitled to go to school." The court's upholding this kind of short-term suspension, she contends, "is like holding that procedural safeguards do not have to be followed if a state agency takes 1% or 2% of a man's land, rather than 10% or 100%." The Supreme Court has mandated hearings prior to the temporary suspension of welfare benefits, wage payments and even a driver's license, she adds, and the same constitutional safeguards should be applied to temporarily cutting off a child's education.

Another Legal Battle: Hair Codes

But as the battle over due process in the schools continues, many more legal problems continue to crop up in the classroom, making the knowledge of the current status of the law almost as important to a principal or a teacher as the latest curriculum materials. And perhaps one of the most

perplexing legal battles being fought in educational circles is the battle over long hair. On this matter, even the courts can't agree. "There is continuing confusion," Thomas George said. Federal circuit courts are split almost down the middle on whether the issue presents a substantial federal question on which they should rule, he stated. According to the lawyer, the Fifth, Sixth, Ninth and Tenth Circuit Courts have ruled that hair cases do not present a substantial federal question, and thus they have allowed school hair codes to stand. Yet, the First, Third, Fourth, Seventh and Eighth Circuit Courts have ruled not only that such codes are matters for federal consideration but also that they are constitutionally illegal.

And the Supreme Court further muddied the waters by refusing to hear a lower court case and rule on the matter once and for all. "Therefore," George said, "the right to wear long hair depends on where in the United States a student goes to school." For instance, hair regulations have been sustained in Colorado, Texas, Kansas, New Mexico, California; in the South; and in the Michigan-Ohio corridor. In contrast, federal courts have ruled that regulations on hair length were invalid in Minnesota, Iowa, Virginia, Maine, Wisconsin, some Midwestern states and Pennsylvania.

The only criteria concerning hair length that the courts generally have agreed upon, George said, is that bizarre hair styles can be banned if they are deemed harmful to the health or safety of a student--such as a student with long hair bending over a lathe in wood shop--or if the hair style creates a disruption that would directly interfere with the educational process.

School Newspapers: Freedom of Expression on the Line?

Another major legal skirmish on the school front is over the printing and distribution of school newspapers. Here, the courts, relying on the Tinker decision that "students are entitled to freedom of expression of their views," generally have ruled in favor of students' rights to print papers free of prior censorship and free of reprisals for printing what teachers and administrators don't like.

A significant case is that of Scoville v. Board of Education of Joliet Township, in which two high school students were expelled from school for selling copies of their home-produced newspaper, which contained remarks highly critical of school administrators. The lower courts upheld the expulsions, but the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals reversed them in no uncertain terms. The court held that the critical remarks "undoubtedly offended and displeased the dean, but mere expression of the students' feelings with which school officials do not wish to contend...is not the showing required by the Tinker test to justify expulsion." The court then added:

> While recognizing the need of effective discipline in operating schools, the law requires that the school rules be related to the state interest in the production of well trained intellects with constructive critical stances, lest student imaginations, intellects and wills be unduly stifled or chilled. Schools are increasingly accepting student criticism as a worthwhile influence in school administration.

To that admonition, a Connecticut District Court, in Eisner v. Stamford Board of Education, adds:

> The remedy for today's alienation and disorder among the youth is not less, but more, free expression of ideas. Student newspapers are valuable educational tools, and also serve to aid school administrators by providing them with an insight into student thinking and student problems. They are valuable, peaceful channels of student protest which should be encouraged, not suppressed.

And still another federal court decision, in Sullivan v. Houston Independent School District, warns administrators that they can't discipline student editors just because their product causes trouble. Said the court:

> It is also clear that if a student complies with reasonable rules as to times and places for distribution within the school and does so in an orderly, nondisruptive manner, then he should not suffer if other students, who are lacking in self-control, tend to overreact, thereby becoming a disruptive influence.

And a U.S. District Court in Michigan ruled in Vaught v. Van Buren Public Schools that the use of a traditional student shock word could not be prohibited in a high school newspaper, since it also appeared in magazines and books in the school library. Prior censorship, too, generally has been ruled out by the courts. The First Circuit, for instance, ruled in Riseman v. School Committee that "no advance approval shall be required of the content of any such (student) paper...(or) any written forms of expression."

Yet, some courts have held that teachers and administrators can exercise some perfectly legal safeguards in dealing with student newspapers. One of them is to view a publication before it is distributed to make sure it is not so inflammatory that it would clearly disrupt the school.

As Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes said as far back as 1919, in Schenck v. United States: "The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing a panic."

Both the time and the place of distribution of a student newspaper within a school may be regulated by a principal so the distribution will not disrupt the educational process, and according to Thomas George, papers, under certain severe circumstances, may even be banned legally from the schools in order to:

- Prevent incitement of others to commit unlawful acts, such as calling for destruction of school property.
- Prevent inflammatory words that would lead to physical retaliation, such as calling for gang warfare.
- Protect the sensibilities of others against such things as racial and ethnic slurs, slander, libel and obscenities.
- Prevent overt disrespect for the American flag.

Generally, the following advice in The Reasonable Exercise of Authority should apply to all student newspapers:

> School sponsored publications should be as free as other newspapers in the community to report the news and to editorialize. Nonschool sponsored papers and other publications, including an "underground press," should not be prohibited, assuming that they, too, observe the normal rules for reasonable journalism.

'Fairness': Another Name for Due Process

Many school teachers and administrators complain about the new restrictions that courts have imposed on them, and others pine for the good old days when principals could rule by fiat. Yet, educators, in growing numbers, are beginning to see benefits in treating students as citizens under the Constitution. And their watchword is "fairness." Says Ackerly in The Reasonable Exercise of Authority:

> The underlying concept, understood by almost every American, is one of fairness, a fair hearing, a fair trial, a fair judgment. Every citizen needs to know that the government is not permitted to be arbitrary or repressive, and that he will have a fair opportunity to have his side of a controversy openly considered.... These considerations are as necessary to administrative proceedings in schools as they are to more formal trials in courts of law.

According to Richard S. Vacca, professor of education at Virginia Commonwealth U., educators must recognize the fact that due process, seen by many as "an enemy that has literally crippled effective public school operation," is, in reality, only another name for fairness. "For years," he says, "public school teachers have emphasized the concept of fairness in their daily activities. Fair play on the playground or in the gym. Fair treatment of fellow students by other students. Fairness of teachers toward their students. Fairness is "a foundation element that must be present in the relationships that exist between teachers and their pupils." Why then, Vacca asks, "do some board members, administrators and teachers resent it when a student complains that he was denied due process?"

The U. of Florida's Harold Levinson looks at the new doctrines of due process for students as part of the consumer protection movement. "I think one of the most important aspects," he says, "is that the student is a consumer of the school's product." And, he adds, "we are placing increasing emphasis on consumers of all types. We feel we are entitled to have a safe car to ride in; the person who buys merchandise in the supermarket is entitled to fair labeling."

The nation's legal system, he says, "has shifted dramatically away from protecting the producer in favor of protecting the consumer." Perhaps, he concludes, "our emphasis on student rights is a manifestation of this broader tendency of the legal system to say that we have protected the administration for quite a while, so now it's time to think a little bit about the students and maybe even the faculty, to the extent that they are consumers."

BLUEPRINTS FOR BETTER DISCIPLINE

There is no one answer on how best to tackle the problem of discipline, or the lack of it, in the nation's schools. Yet there are many effective approaches a school district or a single school can take. Although these approaches do not constitute the ultimate answers to the problem, they can form a blueprint--a charted course toward better days ahead. There will be plenty of hurdles and detours along the way--such as the storm that continues to surround the whole issue of corporal punishment and the vast new legal ramifications of court-mandated student rights.

First: A Code of Discipline

Perhaps the most important base on which to build an effective discipline program is a fair, realistic and constructive discipline code--one that is published and distributed to faculty, students and parents. A written code eliminates the gray areas and the unanswered questions caused by vague, ambiguous and even unwritten codes of conduct that traditionally have governed education.

Discipline codes today must take into account the new student freedoms guaranteed by the courts--courts which, for the first time in history, are delving deeply into the formerly sacrosanct area of student rights and discipline in the schools. Codes must deal with disruptions that were almost unheard of a decade ago. They must deal with freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and freedom of expression, as well as with excesses of these freedoms. Most of all, they must clearly and concisely tell every member of the school community just what type of conduct is acceptable as well as what is not acceptable.

The New Hanover County (N.C.) Board of Education puts it this way: "It is the objective and policy of the Board of Education to recognize, preserve and protect the individual rights of all students...and yet at the same time to encourage and enforce the exercise of these rights within the necessary framework of an orderly, efficient and continuing school program. Within this policy framework it is the continuing duty of the school board, the administrative staff and the faculties of each school to prohibit and prevent types of student conduct that constitute a menace to the continuing educational program...or that become dangerous, disruptive or destructive, and therefore endanger the proper maintenance and function of the school program.

"The school board further recognizes that students are fully protected and have all rights extended to citizens under the U.S. Constitution and its

amendments, and that said rights cannot be abridged except in accordance with due process of the law. Therefore, in order to delineate and clarify the fundamental guidelines of student behavior in the schools, and to establish procedures to be followed should serious disciplinary action by school authorities become necessary, the following rules and procedures have been adopted by the Board of Education...."

Several state boards of education, such as Oregon and Michigan, have ordered that all school districts under their jurisdiction prepare written codes of discipline and student rights. In Oregon, the state legislature passed a law requiring that: "The state board of education...shall prepare and promulgate to all school districts minimum standards for pupil conduct and discipline and for rights and procedures pertaining thereto that are consistent with orderly operation of the educational processes and with fair hearing requirements." The Oregon legislature also mandated that "every district school board shall adopt and attempt to give the widest possible distribution" to a school discipline code complying with minimum standards set down by the state board of education.

In Michigan, State Supt. John W. Porter said in announcing the state board's directive: "The state board has provided assurance that everyone in every community will be fully informed of his or her rights and responsibilities in the educational setting. Students and their parents will know very clearly the rules of the game in relation to suspension and expulsion."

Pressure for discipline codes has come from within schools and school districts, too. Teachers in Nyack High School, Rockland County, N.Y., closed the school for a day in March 1972 to demand a strict discipline code after several incidents of teacher abuse and assault. A code was soon drawn up providing for removal of disruptive students from class.

In Philadelphia, a junior high school teacher was shot to death in the schoolyard in February 1971 by a disruptive student he had disciplined. The student had a record of disruptive behavior in several schools. The incident created an uproar in the school community as teachers, administrators, parents and city officials demanded a new and stricter code for dealing with disciplinary cases. A new code was drawn up that same month calling for immediate suspension from school for acts of a criminal or violent nature, and the transfer of seriously disruptive students to special "vestibule" classes, mini-schools or half-way houses, as well as a general systemwide strengthening of procedures to report and follow up on serious incidents.

In introducing the new code, the Philadelphia Board of Education said: "Schools must be safe and free of fear.... There must be rules governing the conduct and behavior of all who work and learn in the schools. And these rules must be firmly and consistently enforced throughout every school, school bus and activity of the school system." The board continued:

> Every individual throughout the system must take a direct, personal and active responsibility for discipline. Discipline begins in the home between parent and child and continues in the classroom with the relationship between the teacher and the pupil. Each has the mutual responsibility for the maintenance of that discipline.

Student Code: More Than a Set of Don'ts

Rules and regulations must be spelled out, clearly and concisely, in the discipline code. But a code doesn't have to be harsh and regulatory. It can be used to involve students and teachers in an interesting learning experience. As Patricia M. Lines, staff attorney for Harvard U.'s Center for Law and Education, wrote in Inequality in Education:

"A code can be instructional. Teachers and students are not expected to know the fine points of constitutional law. A good code can guide teachers in deciding what they should and should not do when faced with a disciplinary problem. Conversely, the same document, if readily available to the student, tells him what his rights are and what procedures he should follow to assert them. More than this," the attorney contended, "a good code can teach students the fundamental principles of democracy by involving them in the rule-making and decision-making process. Order in the classroom is less easily attained when only school authorities want it. It is a natural achievement where students have the authority to regulate themselves."

Arguing further for student involvement in drawing up the code, she said: "Since internally motivated discipline is likely to be the most durable and long-lasting, the student-drafted code is likely to be more effective than even the most elegantly worded code imposed on students by school officials. The final result would not simply be a code; it would be an educational experience for students; it would give students a stake in successful enforcement of the code; and it could promote good relationships between students and school officials, who are no longer viewed as arbitrary authoritarians."

Several cities that already have involved students in drawing up codes of rights and discipline include Philadelphia, New York, Boston, San Francisco and Seattle. In Philadelphia, the "Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities" gives students their own grievance procedure, much like those used by the teachers union and the administrators association. It even provides for ombudsmen to represent students in the whole discipline and grievance procedure. School administrators have found generally that they could dismiss their fears of "student takeover," or "student revolution," once students become actively involved in setting up their own governance.

Generally, a board of education appoints a code-drawing committee which includes students, teachers, principals, administrators and, in some cases, parents. Students on the panel have equal vote with adults. They are usually picked either by their student council or, when several schools are involved in a large district, by the association of student council leaders.

Code Writers: Take Note

Courts consistently have thrown out loosely written or vague discipline codes. The word "misconduct" has been ruled unconstitutionally vague. So has "extreme styles" of dress and grooming. So has "in the best interests of the school." Ambiguous words--the backbone of school discipline for more than a century--will no longer do.

What To Include in the Discipline Code

Most persons with experience in drawing up discipline codes agree that such codes should contain at least three main sections:

- Student rights.
- Rules of conduct and sanctions for violations.
- Regulations for procedural due process in matters involving suspension, transfer and expulsion.

The section on student rights generally covers the constitutional areas of press, speech and assembly, plus provisions for an elected student government. Rules of conduct and sanctions should, as Ms. Lines succinctly puts it, "specify which misdeeds will get students into what kind of trouble." Areas that should be covered include: alcohol, drugs and tobacco; dress and grooming; use of motor vehicles; excesses of free speech, press and assembly; theft; disruption; damage to property; assaults; weapons.

Finally, and perhaps most important, every school or school district should carefully draw its rules on severe disciplinary procedures such as suspension or expulsion. Courts today almost unanimously have mandated that a student charged with an offense that warrants serious punishment must be afforded procedural due process such as a hearing, the right to counsel, the right to cross-examination and the right to face one's accuser. Generally speaking, suspensions in excess of five days must be effected through the hearing process, and in some districts a hearing must precede any suspension at all.

The hearing process should be carefully outlined in the discipline code to prevent legal challenges and possible reversals to disciplinary procedures administered by a school or school district. The code, then, is the foundation for a fair but firm program of discipline in the schools. With it, educators at least have a handle on the discipline problem. Without it, only trouble lies ahead.

Court-Imposed Guidelines: In the Absence of a Code

In the absence of a well defined discipline code, a district may find itself on the defensive when and if it gets involved in a court suit. It may then have to follow guidelines set down by the court and may be forced to change radically its mode of operation. Some school authorities insist on a well defined code in the hopes that students, parents and teachers will know the extent of student rights and responsibilities and what the punishment will be if the student oversteps or ignores the agreed-upon bounds. Clear definitions, say the authorities, should reduce the number of court cases.

In Washington, D.C., for instance, a U.S. District Court issued strict due process guidelines for suspension or for placement of students into special education programs. The suspension ruling, one part of a two-part ruling, was handed down after a year of litigation and controversy regarding provision for public education for handicapped, disturbed or retarded children. The suspension ruling was extended to cover all public school students.

The Washington, D.C., Board of Education adopted a detailed procedure for schools to follow in order to comply with the specific requirements of the ruling by Judge Joseph C. Waddy in August 1972. Teachers who plan to suspend, transfer or expel a student must first report this action to the principal in writing. If the principal decides to suspend a child for more than two days, the child's parents must be told of the proposed action, the reasons for it and the right of the parent and child to a hearing. Students are entitled to legal counsel and, if the parents cannot afford it, the school board must make an attempt to provide free counsel. Parents must also be given access to the child's school records prior to the hearing. The public schools must bear the burden of proof that the alleged action did occur and that the proposed disciplinary action is appropriate. In any case, no child may be suspended for more than 10 school days.

A significant feature of the decision requires the school system to provide an alternate form of education for a child while he is suspended. The district must also maintain the child in his regular classroom or provide him with other educational services while he is awaiting a hearing. "What this means for teachers," said one school official, "is that they can no longer write 'Johnny is disruptive.' They must be able to show proof to back that up." In spite of the problems involved, Asst. Supt. Merle Van Dyke says the decision "benefits teachers because it gives them guidelines to follow; it benefits the child because it assures him 'due process'; and it benefits the superintendent because it defines the extent of his responsibility."

One difficult problem cited by Van Dyke in the actual implementation of the guidelines has been that of providing alternate programs for suspended students. He said some schools have handled the problem well; others have not. But, he stated, in a system of 180 administrative units, what finally happens in the individual school is up to the individual principal. Providing alternate programs usually requires an increased outlay of cash for space and personnel--which poses another unsolved problem.

In addition, some teachers and principals complained in an open hearing that the suspension ruling has had a "crippling effect" on discipline in the school system. The Rev. Raymond Kemp, a member of the Board of Education and chairman of the board's Student Life and Community Involvement Committee, says the district lacks the support services necessary to make the decree operable. Meanwhile, Father Kemp's committee is working with all segments of the school and community in an effort to complete a current and comprehensive guide for students covering both their rights and responsibilities. The task has not been an easy one, according to Father Kemp, and as of mid-May 1973 completion of the guide was not in sight. "What we've learned so far is that it's going to be a long process," he said.

One Possible Answer: Behavior Modification

Turning from districtwide discipline policies objectively disseminated and enforced through codes, to the ever-present problem of discipline in the individual classroom, research shows that behavior modification is one currently favored method for influencing Johnny's deportment. Behavior modification does not mean, as one newspaper columnist guessed recently, to "smack

somebody." Quite the opposite. It means, generally, to reward the good and, within limits, to ignore the bad.

Behavior modification gained prominence some 40 years ago when psychologist B. F. Skinner found that if a pigeon is rewarded by a bite of food falling into his cage when he pecks at a certain button, he'll peck at that button again and again. Sounds simple today. But it was revolutionary then. Skinner called the whole process "operant conditioning," whereby a conditioned response, the pecking, is achieved through a primary reinforcer--the food--and an unconditioned response, the eating of the food.

For 20 years psychologists worked in laboratory settings with birds, animals and severely retarded humans to produce even minimal conditioned responses such as the raising of an arm in a retardate who before operant conditioning had never been taught to do anything. Slowly, it became evident that the same process would work with totally "normal" human beings. And the classroom became the laboratory.

Now, teachers are finding it works two ways. If Johnny is rewarded by praise (a primary reinforcer) every time he is good, he will enjoy that praise (an unconditional response), and he will be good again (a conditioned response). Similarly, if Jimmy is ignored when he is bad (no reinforcement), he will not like the lack of attention paid to him (an unconditioned response), and he will cease being bad (a conditioned response).

Conversely, it turns out, all that time Mrs. Thiswhistle has been yelling at Jimmy at the top of her lungs (primary reinforcement), he has enjoyed all the attention (an unconditioned response), and decided to be bad again and again (a conditioned response). These examples, of course, are an oversimplification but, basically, they illustrate what behavior modification is all about. As many proponents of behavior modification put it, "Catch a child being good for a change."

Testing programs in the late 1960s began to produce dramatic results from the first widespread use of behavior modification in the nation's classrooms. As reported in such publications as the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis and the Journal of Special Education, these results showed a remarkable decrease in classroom disruption, even in previously severe situations.

In one test, with a class of elementary school children who had been involved in some form of deviant behavior 62% of the time before behavior modification, the level quickly dropped to 29%. In another similar situation, teachers reported that disruptive behavior in their classrooms fell to one-third of its previous level.

In one particularly disruptive class of 18 third- and fourth-grade children in an inner-city area, teachers noted that in almost any given 20-minute period every child in the class had been struck or touched by another pupil at least once. Only 50% to 60% of class time was actually spent on schoolwork. The rest was wasted trying, and many times failing, to maintain order. Disruptive movement by pupils exceeded hand raising by 100%. So the teacher used a form of behavior modification that not only praised good behavior but also involved a system of token rewards whereby good behavior earned "points,"

which could be accumulated and turned in for tangible rewards. A small number of points could be exchanged for candy and balloons. A larger number of points could purchase a ship-building experiment or a trip to a museum. The class changed quickly. Time spent on schoolwork rose to 80% or more. Raising hands to answer questions generally took the place of disruptive movement. Teacher control took a quick turn for the better as deviant behavior decreased markedly.

Another experiment reversed the procedure with 28 well behaved children from middle-class homes, who were already used to positive reinforcement and encouragement from their teacher. The teacher first began offering no praise at all. She then resorted generally to scolding, threatening and raising her voice. The pre-experiment level of 9% disruptive behavior quickly rose to 25% during the period of no praise, and to 31% during the period of scolding. Then, just as dramatically, disruptive behavior returned to the 9% level as soon as the positive method of classroom control was restored.

The Teacher's Behavior Sets the Pace

Looking at results of behavior modification efforts like those reported above, educators and psychologists began to realize that the methods a teacher uses to control her class may have more of an effect on discipline than the natural instinct of the child to be good or bad. "Well, what can you do?" Mrs. Thiswhistle used to say. "They're just bad kids." Yet, the success of behavior modification seems to indicate that is no longer necessarily the case. Michael J. A. Howe, associate professor of educational psychology at the U. of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada, said: "An important implication of this experiment lies in its demonstration of the extent to which the behavior of a 'good' class is dependent on the behavior of the teacher. It appears possible that some of the differences of teacher control between different schools and the differences between classes within a school may be less affected by pupil variables, such as social class and peer organization, and more affected by teacher control methods than is generally supposed.

"Many factors determine how children behave, especially in the ghetto," he contended. "But it is very likely that differences in teachers' methods of control contribute to the greater incidence of deviant classroom behavior in disadvantaged than in middle-class schools. At the very least," he asserted, "the results show that the classroom behavior of young children depends more upon what the teacher does than some teachers imagine.

"It is clear," he added, "that by using appropriate reinforcement strategies the teacher can exert powerful control over classroom behavior and, hence, the importance of the teacher's own actions cannot be overestimated."

Howe and other proponents of behavior modification say they realize it's unrealistic for a youngster to be expected to go through life being patted on the head every time he's good. And, thus, behavior modification isn't an end in itself. Yet, they argue that if a pupil's behavior problems prevent him at an early age from getting the kind of education he needs so desperately to succeed in the future, then behavior modification is a necessary ingredient toward attaining that education.

"Certainly," Howe says, "the question of dependence upon external reinforcement requires serious consideration. Achieving classroom control by positive reinforcement is an initial step toward a state of affairs in which children can function independently, and not a final goal in itself. Some children may have to go through a phase of dependence before they can be effectively independent. The child who eventually is to value learning for its own sake must, at some point, start learning in school. And positive reinforcement given by the teacher is useful if it helps to bring about conditions in which successful learning may begin."

Glasser Recommends Positive Reinforcement

William Glasser, a prominent psychiatrist and author, is a leading disciple of positive reinforcement. Glasser, author of the best-selling book, Schools Without Failure, and president of the Institute for Reality Therapy and the Education Training Center, Los Angeles, sees adults' quickness to brand young children as failures as one of the primary causes of discipline problems in the schools.

Students, much like adults, he said, "want a little pat on the head, a little recognition as a person" both before they start a job and as they work. But, he said, "after kindergarten, schools continue to demand that the work come first. Kindergarten is the only place where we accept kids as people, and they succeed in kindergarten. If they don't learn everything we had planned, we still value them and we don't get upset."

But first grade is different, Glasser said. "After all, we've got to teach them to read. So the teacher says to the little kid, 'Read!' The community says, 'Read!' And if the child doesn't read we fail him. Usually, he takes the failure personally. He thinks we not only failed him in reading, but as a human being. When this happens, he starts behaving totally as a failure. He stops almost all schoolwork and often becomes a discipline problem in order to gain recognition, if only as a failure."

Yet, Glasser said, "We keep telling him, 'Read! Write! Do arithmetic! Sit still! Keep quiet! Shut up!' Then we find all kinds of sophisticated explanations for why he isn't learning. We buy all kinds of complicated equipment and establish special classes to help him learn, but nothing much happens because he believes he is a failure, and failures get attention and recognition only by failing and misbehaving.

"I believe," Glasser said, "that there are two ways of stopping this destructive process: first, by not failing kids; and second, by making friends with them." Being friendly with someone "reinforces his role as a successful human being," he said.

Teachers must learn "to care and become friends with the kids with whom they work, letting them know that we like them as individuals, that we do feel their humanity is of primary importance, and that we want to work with them to help all of us grow toward our maximum potential as human beings," he said. "If we make this change, learning can become a joyful and exciting experience, both for the children and those of us responsible for working with them."

The Seattle Approach: Praise in Place of Punishment

Seattle is one of the many school systems delving more and more into behavior modification, aided by the efforts of psychologist Wayne Foley and counselor John Willson. Foley and Willson work as a pupil guidance team in helping to ease conflict between teachers and disruptive youth. The team goes from school to school to deal with problem pupils, specializing in situations where a particular teacher is having problems with her class due to disruptions by one or more pupils on a regular basis.

Punishment is rarely the answer, Foley says. "Punishment following a disruptive act does nothing to anticipate or even to prevent future outbursts," he says. "In itself, punishment only tends to suppress deviant behavior temporarily, and does not teach or strengthen appropriate new behavior." Thus, the two educators contend, such punishment, force or power generally must be meted out in ever-increasing doses. And as youngsters grow up, they increasingly resent such controls and many times actively rebel against them, the team members add.

The answer is praise, Foley and Willson say. "While, under certain conditions, children's behavior can be motivated by almost anything," Foley says, "by far the most powerful and effective reward is praise." And once the teacher knows how to capitalize on praise and use it effectively, the two men contend, she has the power to stop classroom disruption before it begins. "Only in rare cases of severe emotional disturbance," Foley concludes, "is removal of the child from the classroom the appropriate way to try to help him solve his problem."

Behavior Modification: An Awakening Force?

Behavior modification should be used to "awaken and maintain the curiosity of a child...to build a student's self-confidence...to cultivate a love of learning," said Elliot L. Richardson, former secretary of the Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, in a blistering speech before the 1971 National Education Assn. convention.

"In recent years," Richardson said, "the paramount rationale for education has been its investment potential--its economic returns over a lifetime. Children compete in classrooms for grades," he said, "the way in which their fathers compete for sales awards and for elevation of their careers into better companies." Such a process, he said, turns education into a "rigorous toilet training of the mind," in which teachers are expected "to be disciplinarians, force feeders, almost anything but teachers in a grim and relentless process of getting our children through their school years."

Teachers must build rather than destroy a student's self-esteem and instill in him "the belief that he can learn," Richardson said, adding that the question is not whether the teachers will modify behavior, but <u>how</u>, and to what end. There is more than one way, if I may be permitted a pun, to Skinner a cat."

Look Before Leaping into Behavior Modification

An objection to the current uses of behavior modification which "focus more on discipline than on intellectual growth" has been raised by two educators in the May 1973 issue of Phi Delta Kappan. "There are a number of inconsistencies in logic and some serious dangers involved in the use of behavior modification techniques in group and classroom situations," say Bryan L. Lindsey, assistant professor of the U. of Georgia, and James W. Cunningham, a graduate assistant at the university. They list 12 reasons why educators should proceed with caution:

1. Behavior modification makes discipline a system of rewards.... Good discipline...is progress toward mutually established and worthwhile goals.

2. It prepares students for a nonexistent world; to ignore unacceptable behavior is to socialize for an unexisting society.

3. It undermines existing internal control.

4. It is unfair. To refrain from...rewarding behavior of some students for fear of weakening their internal control is to be faced with... providing rewards only for those without internal control.

5. It could instruct children to be mercenary. A system of rewards or punishments or both requires the teacher to decide how much conformity or nonconformity is enough.

6. It limits the expression of student discontent. Unacceptable classroom behavior is often an indication that content and methods used in teaching are inappropriate for the needs of students.

7. It denies human reasoning. A system of rewards which would "pay" for acceptable behavior and academic effort surrenders the appeal of the reasonableness of what the child is expected to do....

8. It teaches action/reaction principles. For behavior to be internalized, it is best that it be understood by the individual whose behavior is being changed.

9. It encourages students to "act" as if they are learning, in order to obtain rewards...causing the teacher to assume that desired behavior patterns are being established.

10. It emphasizes short-range rather than long-range effects.

11. It would make the student assume a passive role in his own education [that] could result in weakening individual motives.

12. It is a totalitarian concept in which the behavior shown by an individual is regarded as more important than the state of affairs in the individual's life leading to his behavior.

Imposing Sanctions for 'Bad Behavior'

Obviously, behavior modification can't work miracles all the time, especially in the upper grades where disruptive students have had time to become entrenched in their ways. So some students have to pay the piper. And the payment is generally in the form of sanctions imposed for bad behavior by the principal, the superintendent or the board of education.

Serious sanctions, such as suspension, are coming more and more under the scrutiny of the courts and the legal community, but no one, as yet, claims to have found a better substitute for dealing with substantial deviant behavior. After experiencing almost a decade of student protest and disruption, many school districts, particularly those in the big cities, are taking a hard line.

Philadelphia, Pa.: The Philadelphia policy is straight and to the point: "Any individual who commits a violent or other criminal act on school property shall be removed from the school premises immediately. Individuals who commit such crimes as assault; carrying a deadly weapon; threat to do bodily harm; sale or use of drugs, alcohol, or other illegal commodity; robbery (including shakedown and extortion); or any offense viewed by the administrator-in-charge as being sufficiently serious shall be immediately suspended."

Houston, Tex.: In Houston, punishment for a different kind of disruption is equally swift: "A student who leaves class to take part in a boycott, to instigate a boycott, or who otherwise fails to abide by the rules and regulations and the reasonable requests of school personnel, is immediately to be suspended from school." The Houston code states bluntly: "We cannot provide quality education for our students in a state of disruption. As such, we cannot tolerate student disruptions, whether they be in the form of a boycott, walkout, sit-in or other such activities."

In a straight-from-the-shoulder message to all administrators, following student disruptions, Houston Supt. George C. Garver laid down the law in March 1972: "School personnel do not have to take abuse from any student," he said, "whether it be physical or verbal. Students should be reminded of the fact that they will comply with our rules, and their right to attend school is subject to their compliance with these rules."

On the other hand, Garver said, enforcement of a tough discipline policy can't be a one-way street. "The school district and the personnel of each building have a responsibility to be sensitive to the needs of students," he counseled. "As such," he added, "we should be willing through existing legitimate channels of communication to hear student concerns and, where appropriate, to make adjustments in light of their concerns.

"However," the Houston superintendent added, "the final responsibility for the management of our school district is vested with the school personnel and the board of education, and we cannot and will not abdicate this responsibility. There is no place in a democratic society for anarchy or mob rule," he concluded.

Texas: In Texas, the state legislature stepped into the act in 1971 by passing a law prohibiting willful disruption of classes or other school activities; defining punishable conduct to include noise, enticement of students away from their classes and prevention of students from attending classes. Such action is considered a misdemeanor punishable by a $200 fine.

New York: In New York, both the city and the state, controversy raged over another form of sanction for disruptive behavior--the withholding of high school diplomas from students for disciplinary reasons. The dispute surfaced in May 1972 when Harvey B. Scribner, then chancellor of the New York City Public Schools, ordered that diplomas could no longer be withheld to punish a student for poor conduct. Scribner said the diploma is not a "legitimate disciplinary tool" because of the "inherent difficulty in defining 'citizenship' and the clear danger of labeling students as good or bad citizens."

Three New York City principals associations immediately complained that the decision "destroys a sound and long held concept of education which places citizenship, social responsibility and character development among the highest priorities in education." The controversy spread to the state level when the state assembly passed a bill which would have reversed Scribner and required students "to show performance and growth in the vital areas of character and citizenship development" to earn a diploma. The sponsor of the bill, which eventually fell by the wayside in the state senate, said it would give schools "punitive leverage" for dealing with unruly students.

Expulsion: An 'Exceptionally Serious Step'

The courts consider expulsion an "exceptionally serious step" for a school board to take, says John C. Walden, head of Auburn U.'s Dept of Educational Administration and Supervision. He advises, therefore, that the principal, superintendent and board give careful attention to court requirements for due process of law in expulsion cases.

Walden identifies with the administrator who wonders whether a youngster's best interests will be served if he is excluded from school and, in a sense, "put on the streets." He concludes: "In some circumstances there appears to be no alternative. The school is obligated to protect the youngsters placed in its care; it cannot permit situations to develop in which pupils are subjected to assaults. To do this is to risk a suit for negligence."

In a direct attack on this type of serious student disruption and violence on campus, the Los Angeles City Schools initiated in October 1972 a "get tough" policy on dangerous weapons at school locations. Students who violate the policy are referred by the superintendent to the district's Personnel and Schools Committee. The City Board of Education then acts on the committee's recommendations. Enforcement of the "get tough" policy has increased the number of students permanently dismissed from the Los Angeles system. By late April 1973, 74 students had been barred from the city schools, compared to 45 students for the entire 1971-72 school year. The reasons for expulsion ranged from assault on a teacher by one 8th grader to possession of a loaded

weapon by another; possession and distribution of drugs by a 9th grader; assaults on students and teachers and possession of a shotgun by 11th graders.

While maintaining that "the district's efforts have been directed toward controlling and suppressing this kind of behavior," Supt. William J. Johnston added that "the threat of violence is totally incompatible with an educational atmosphere that encourages learning and cooperative relationships."

Matching the Disciplinary Procedure to the Violation

The Alexandria (Va.) Public Schools have come up with a computerized system of taking care of the "little things" students do that are apt to have the teacher less than amiable by the end of the day. Douglas Poretz, public information officer for the Alexandria schools, says the system of handling minor infractions of the discipline code has proved to be highly successful since its implementation at the start of the 1971-72 school year.

The system works like this: at the beginning of the school year, each classroom teacher in grades 7-12 receives a preprinted batch of computer cards listing 20 violations of classroom behavior. If the student is guilty of one of the violations (e.g., skipping class, cheating, using foul language), the teacher checks the appropriate box on the card, fills in the date, her name and the name of the student, and returns the card to the principal at the end of the day. The principal turns the card over to the computer center; it's fed into a machine the following day along with instructions for the type of letter to be sent to the student's parents.

The letter contains the details of the misconduct and the type of action the principal and the teacher recommend to the parents. One parent may be asked to get in touch with the individual teacher or the assistant principal or principal; another may be asked to attend a parent-teacher conference. The system not only keeps the parents informed of the misbehavior of their son or daughter but also it provides an accurate and complete record of all infractions. If more serious disciplinary measures are deemed necessary, the school system stands ready to present evidence of past misdeeds.

This system is supplemented by strict procedures on discipline which were negotiated by the Alexandria Education Assn. (AEA) in its 1971-72 contract with the Alexandria School Board. The contract provides that a disruptive student who has been excluded from class for a serious violation of the discipline code "will not be returned to the class until both the teacher and the principal agree that the issue or action involved in the exclusion of the student has been given disciplinary attention." In effect, the clause allows the teacher and the principal to make a joint decision on the reinstatement of any student who has been thrown out of class for disciplinary reasons.

Another Approach: Disciplinary Schools

Another sanction being used, especially in larger school systems, is the transfer of disruptive or delinquent children to another school or to a special center. In Philadelphia, for instance, the school district's strict

discipline code, which was adopted in February 1971, calls for "improved programs for the rehabilitation of disturbed and disruptive students" in "mini-schools," half-way house type residential schools, and vestibule classes in existing schools. The purpose in all of the district's programs is to give the student "serious professional attention."

The Philadelphia code also calls for vastly improved services and conditions at the school system's existing remedial disciplinary schools for disruptive students, especially in the area of psychiatric services. In this city and in many others, the traditional approach of yanking a disruptive student out of a regular school and casting him into a reform school with a fancy pedagogical name is being closely reexamined. Many school officials are convinced, perhaps more than ever before, that such students must be removed from the setting in which they are being disruptive. At the same time, school officials are more concerned than ever about what happens to such students in their new setting.

In Dallas, for instance, a Youth Education Service Center was opened specifically for students suspended from other schools. The center features small class size, its own library, individual and group counseling, and psychological testing, as well as a regular educational program so the students can keep up with their schoolwork while on suspension. "We feel," says James O. Reeves, teacher-in-charge at the center, "that we can give the student assistance in working out his problems and make him better able to adjust to the situation when he returns to his home school."

Robert L. Shelton, administrative assistant for school operations in the Dallas schools, said: "Past records have indicated students often have been involved in additional problems because of the lack of supervision while on suspension. At the same time they have progressively fallen further behind in their class work." Yet, Shelton said, it all won't be peaches and cream at the new center. "Along with opportunities, there must be responsibilities. Students will be expected to display a positive attitude and a willingness to conform to regulations governing the behavior of students while making an honest effort to improve their academic standing," he said.

In-School Discipline Programs

Going one step further, some school districts have set up in-school suspension programs where students who have been suspended continue to attend their own school, but in a different capacity. Such a program has been implemented in at least four Pennsylvania schools: Tredyffrin-Easttown Schools, Great Valley High School, Northern Chester County Vocational-Technical School, and Valley Forge Junior High School.

"Students are in school to learn," said Tredyffrin-Easttown Supt. George Garwood. "To suspend them and send them home to the television set is not the best way of handling a behavior problem." Under the program, suspended students continue their work in a separate part of the school under supervision of in-school suspension program supervisors. They are required to make up all their missed work before being readmitted to their regular classroom. A conference with parents and student is a prerequisite to readmission.

Another form of in-school discipline programs is the demerit system. One such system operates, amid considerable complaint from students but with enthusiastic backing of parents, at Bishop McDevitt High School in Wyncote, Pa. The principal of the school, the Rev. John J. Foster, readily admits he is a strict disciplinarian. The system came to light when a student wrote a letter to a Philadelphia newspaper, saying, "Help! My rights as a citizen of the United States are being oppressed."

Such complaints, says Father Foster, are nonsense. He adds: "It's the abuse of freedom that we're against." Under the new system, students can be given demerits from a prepared list outlining 25 offenses and the corresponding point penalties. Points range from one for "improper language," to four for smoking and 10 for truancy or fighting. Other violations include misbehavior--even at away-from-home football games--speeding or reckless driving to and from school, and parking infractions.

When a pupil gets eight demerits, he has a talk with a guidance counselor. Ten and he's suspended from school, to return only when accompanied by his parents. An accumulation of 30 means he's out of school for good. Once a student gets 25 or more, he's summoned to Father Foster's study and usually given a chance to have five demerits taken away in return for good conduct for a month.

The new system replaced an old, traditional detention system in which students were kept after school by teachers for being bad. Now, the teacher merely outlines the offense and recommends a certain number of demerits. The principal says the demerit system helps a student understand why he's being punished whereas, under the detention program, students didn't know where they were wrong. "They would just hang around for an hour after school doing nothing." As a result, he added, "they just hated the school more."

In response to student criticism, Father Foster says: "We're not trying to make a police state. A few pupils aren't getting the main point, i.e., with every ounce of freedom goes an ounce of responsibility."

Community Agency Lightens Counselors' Load

California's Bassett Unified School District works with a community Youth Service Bureau staffed by both adults and students. The bureau provides badly needed individual counseling to students, particularly those students whose disruptive behavior is a disturbing influence on the high school. The bureau supplements the services of the school's four counselors, each of whom was responsible for about 600 students, making it all but impossible to conduct individual counseling or even small group work.

The Youth Service Bureau also persuaded the U. of Southern California's School of Social Work to send graduate students to Bassett, where they would work one day a week for field work credit. The bureau offers free psychological counseling for disruptive students, and has a full-time job developer who places in jobs about nine youths a week.

Student Involvement: A Positive Approach to Discipline Problems

A positive approach to better discipline gaining acceptance around the country is student involvement in many areas of school life--from helping to set districtwide codes of conduct to involvement in the individual classroom setting. One example is a class committee set up by a high school teacher in an urban area which had serious problems with violence and disruption in its schools.

The committee was made up of natural leaders--students who were respected by their peers. The committee divided the class into subcommittees. One subcommittee was set up to study the legal ramifications of handling major disciplinary problems. Another was set up to help the teacher physically remove any troublemaking intruders from the room.

Still another was set up to carry on class lessons if the teacher had to leave the room on disciplinary matters. Not only was the class fully prepared to handle any outbreaks of disruption that might occur but also it was involved in a deep and penetrating study of the entire problem of discipline. In the process, it transformed itself from a troublesome group of young men to a somewhat model class.

Elementary schools can become involved, too. In the Bladensburg (Md.) Elementary School, for instance, the entire school was divided into four "little schools," each of which worked on its own disciplinary problems. In one case, when one of the four sections was misbehaving in the lunchroom, all members of that section discussed the problem, then elected two representatives to work out the problem with the two teachers. During their meeting with the teachers, the students took the lead, setting standards for cafeteria behavior. The problem was solved almost immediately, mainly because rules had been set by the students themselves and their peers accepted them as reasonable.

Increased Security Combats Large-Scale Discipline Problem

In many school systems, particularly big city districts, there seems to be little alternative to vastly increased security measures to combat large-scale discipline problems in the form of outright violence and disruption.

In New York City, for instance, the board of education was being pressured on all sides to improve school safety. The issue was page-one copy for the school system's new tabloid newspaper, Learning in New York. The article detailed the steps being taken by the district to combat its large-scale discipline problems.

A new school safety administrator, Eldrige Waith, was appointed to coordinate all school safety measures. One of the first services of Waith's office was to screen and hire 250 new student service officers from 945 applicants. Credentials of the applicants, both men and women, were carefully checked by the police department, by the board's Office of Personnel and by Waith's office. After two weeks of intensive training, the new security officers joined the 575 already at work in the city high schools. In addition,

the new applicants receive inservice training from 20 student service coordinators who are part of Waith's staff. The district hopes to be able to add another 125 security officers to the force by Spring 1974, bringing to 1,050 the number of officers in the city's 94 high schools. Some high schools would have up to 18 officers, others as few as 4. In addition, a 30-man mobile squad can be moved to those areas where it is most needed.

At the decentralized junior high, intermediate and elementary levels, Waith's office will coordinate plans for hiring some 600 security officers to supplement ' 5 guards who worked in the junior high schools during the 1972-73 school year. Other school safety measures in operation in the New York schools include:

- The development of school safety plans tailored to meet the needs of each school. Each plan is being drawn up by all segments of the school and community, including the United Federation of Teachers chapter chairmen.

- Establishment of a planning unit in Waith's office. The unit is responsible for providing a sound data base and analysis of incidents and problems involving school safety; designing and implementing recruitment, training and career ladder programs for safety personnel in cooperation with institutions of higher learning; continuing to provide in-depth analysis of school safety plans; providing and testing safety equipment.

- Development of a plan to put at least two student service officers in each of the city's elementary schools, due to their increased susceptibility to "outside intruders."

- Involvement of the Student Action Committee for Safety in "working to find ways to involve high school students in achieving safe and orderly learning environments that are not repressive."

- Establishment of a School Stability Team, patterned after the police liaison team in Flint, Mich., to achieve attitudinal changes among students toward the police and to the laws of society.

In Philadelphia, the board of education hired a mobile security force of 80 men and women, most of them former policemen or members of the armed forces with security training. This force is used as the need arises for added security at various schools throughout the city. The force augments some 500 nonteaching assistants, whose original job was to free the teacher from a wide variety of nonteaching duties, but the majority of whose time was being spent on security matters. The board also hired a lieutenant and an inspector from the city's police department to head internal and building security operations; equipped a roving night patrol of facilities security specialists with police-type cars and two-way radios; and pressured the City Council into passing a tough anti-trespass ordinance for the city's schools.

The Philadelphia schools also assign one or two uniformed policemen to each inner-city high school on a regular, full-time basis. At one school, considered to be one of the most disruptive in the city, a white policeman assigned to the school was chosen by the black student body as one of its ombudsmen in the student grievance procedure.

Uniformed Police in Schools: Good or Bad?

The use of both college students and community aides in some districts represents a trend away from the use of regular uniformed police to quell disturbances. According to an investigation into student unrest by the Syracuse U. Research Corp. for the U.S. Office of Education, the use in schools of uniformed police who were untrained to handle students and their problems usually meant trouble. "Tensions and violence," the report said, "tend to be increased rather than reduced. The mere presence of uniformed police inside a school," it added, "is often a cause rather than a deterrent of school disruption." (The report, Disruption in Urban Public Secondary Schools, was published by the National Assn. of Secondary School Principals.)

Yet, the report said, there are exceptions. One cited was a high school in Detroit, where the school's sprawling campus was patrolled by carefully screened, well trained young policemen called "Detroit Rangers," mounted on mini-motorcycles. "As a result," said the Syracuse report, "fights, crap games and threatening clusters of people in and around the school can be reached quickly, observed and, if necessary, dispersed." More important, the study added, is that these police are "especially effective," because "they are permanently assigned and have taken very special pains to know large numbers of students on a first name, informal basis."

Yet, more and more school districts are turning to nonuniformed security personnel in their schools, with a variety of help from the community, parents and local college students. One principal surveyed by the Syracuse team kept a handy list of telephone numbers of alumni who could come quickly to the school and short-circuit disruptions by quieting younger brothers and sisters, neighbors and friends.

TO WHACK OR NOT TO WHACK

Perhaps no other question has caused more controversy in the history of education than the question of whether corporal punishment should be used on an unruly youngster. And perhaps never has the age-old custom been more in jeopardy of going the way of the one-room schoolhouse than right now. And if, indeed, the hickory stick is finally banned from the nation's schools once and for all, it will mean the end of a tradition that dates back more than 2,800 years.

The practice of paddling, despite its thousands of years of tradition, is under severe attack today. The first crack in the dike came in 1887, when corporal punishment was banned throughout France. Then in the early 1900s some American school systems, e.g., Baltimore, outlawed physical punishment of pupils. More recently, Russia and Poland, voted, albeit in vain, to include a ban on spanking in schools as part of a declaration on the rights of children by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Both countries frown on the use of corporal punishment in their own schools.

And on the first schoolday of 1973, corporal punishment was banned forever from London schools, amid considerable protest from schoolmasters. "People aren't dogs," said Mrs. Hilary Rose, a parent and former schoolteacher who backed the ban. "You don't hit children to stop them from doing things."

In the United States, many agree with Mrs. Rose, although an organized and escalating movement to ban corporal punishment in the nation's schools is being met head-on by counter demands for tougher discipline procedures. At least three states--Maryland, Massachusetts and New Jersey--ban physical punishment in their schools.

Many of the school districts in Maryland do not agree with the ban, which pertained only to teachers up to 1971, thus allowing corporal punishment by school principals. At that time, however, the Maryland State Board of Educa-

A Statistical Taskmaster

One German schoolmaster kept an exact record for 51 years, revealing that he had struck 911,527 blows with a cane, 124,010 with a rod, 20,989 with a ruler, 136,715 with his hand, 12,235 blows to the mouth, 7,905 boxes to the ear, and 1,115,800 raps on the head--in addition to making 777 boys stand on peas, 613 kneel on a triangular block of wood, and 5,000 wear a dunce's cap.

tion adopted a bylaw which also prohibited the use of corporal punishment by principals. When the legislature met again, several counties petitioned for exemption from the ban, and by early 1973, 15 of Maryland's 24 counties--most of them in rural areas--had been granted a free hand. So far, the other nine counties, in which three-fourths of Maryland's schoolchildren live--are still complying with the no-corporal-punishment restriction.

The other 47 states permit corporal punishment in one form or another; 13 expressly provide for it under law. These laws range from Michigan's statute which allows any physical force necessary to maintain order, to Nevada's which discourages the use of force, but does not prohibit it. In California, Delaware, Pennsylvania and Texas, permission to paddle a youngster is based on the doctrine of in loco parentis. This doctrine holds that a teacher takes a parent's place in the classroom and can spank a student if he does something for which his parent conceivably would whack him.

Other states, e.g., Florida, Hawaii, Montana, North Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont and Virginia, temper their laws by confining the force to "reasonable" punishment, or by involving principals or parents in the procedure. Yet, corporal punishment has been banned by some local school boards, particularly in larger cities like New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Pittsburgh, Baltimore and San Francisco.

NEA, ACLU: No Corporal Punishment

The move to abolish corporal punishment is gaining momentum despite state laws, centuries of hickory stick tradition and national polls that show corporal punishment is favored by a majority of teachers, administrators and parents. And part of that momentum is being provided by ACLU and by NEA's Task Force on Corporal Punishment--despite a 1969 NEA poll of its membership showing that 65.3% of elementary teachers and 55.5% of secondary teachers favored "judicious use" of corporal punishment with their students.

An NEA-appointed task force toured the country in early 1972, conducted hearings, and made recommendations on corporal punishment. It stated flatly: "The task force believes that teachers and other school personnel abhor physical violence of persons toward each other, no matter what the form--alley fights, gang warfare, repression by law enforcement agencies, or war between nations." Calling emphatically for the end to corporal punishment in the schools, the task force said it found that striking a child in the classroom does far more harm than good. The task force said it also found:

- Physical punishment usually has to be used over and over again, to be even minimally effective.
- Teaching that might is right increases rather than decreases a student's disruptive behavior.
- Corporal punishment is used much more often against pupils who are smaller and weaker than the teacher; it is used more frequently against poor children and members of minority groups than against children of white, middle-class families.

- In many cases, corporal punishment causes lasting psychological damage to children.

- Corporal punishment increases aggressive hostility, rather than increasing self-discipline.

- The availability of corporal punishment discourages teachers from pursuing other, and better, avenues of discipline.

- Any set limitations on the use of corporal punishment are usually ignored.

The task force criticized the contention that students should be struck, but only infrequently and as a last resort. "A little of a useless and often harmful thing," the report charged, "is no more justifiable than a great deal of it." And if physical punishment really caused lasting improvement in student behavior, it would be not a last resort but a first resort for teachers and principals throughout the country, the task force added.

Setting limits for the application of a few swats here and there doesn't work either, according to the task force. "A school system that condones hitting students," it said, "runs the risk of tempting staff members to exceed the prescribed amount or method in severity." And corporal punishment can be damaging to the teachers themselves, the report said, noting that "the effect of repeatedly and righteously inflicting physical pain is likely to be more detrimental to a teacher's mental health than learning other ways of dealing with frustrating circumstances." While inflicting physical punishment may allow a teacher to temporarily relieve his frustrations, the task force said, under no condition is violence against human beings a proper outlet for frustration.

The task force recommended that all states adopt a model statute outlawing corporal punishment in schools, allowing reasonable physical restraint only to protect teachers or pupils from injury, to obtain possession of a weapon, or to protect property. The report recommended temporary, short-range measures for maintaining discipline in the schools while permanent, long-range solutions are researched and established.

Among the short-range solutions proposed by the task force were:

- Student-teacher agreement on immediate alternatives.

- Counseling on a one-to-one basis by everyone from teachers and administrators, through parents and other volunteers, to psychologists and psychiatrists for both disruptive students and distraught teachers.

- Alternate learning experiences for students "who are bored, turned off or otherwise unreceptive" to traditional educational experiences.

- Inservice programs to help teachers and other school staff learn a variety of techniques for building better interpersonal relations between themselves and students.

- Class discussion of good and bad behavior, their causes and consequences.

Among the long-term solutions seen by the task force are:

- Full involvement of students in the decision-making process.
- Curriculum revision and expansion by students and staff.
- Work-study programs.
- Special programs for dropouts and prospective dropouts.
- Alternative schools within the public school system.
- Smaller class size.
- Full implementation of a code of students' rights.

ACLU: Physical Punishment Illegal

Another agency with deep concern over the use of corporal punishment in schools is the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), which contends that physical punishment is not only ineffective and personally debilitating but also illegal. "The goal of education in a democracy is inextricably linked to the enhancement of the dignity of man," ACLU said in a May 1972 report, Corporal Punishment in the Public Schools. "It is, therefore, startling to confront the fact that schools are the one remaining institution in this country where corporal punishment may be legally inflicted," ACLU said.

Paralleling in many ways much of the research in the NEA task force report, the ACLU study is even more blunt and to the point. "The most important fact about violent bodily punishment," it contends, "is the high probability of its doing the victim an affirmative injury--psychological, educational or both. While the kind of injury may vary considerably, depending on the age and emotional condition of the victim, it is likely to be serious."

The danger of psychological damage may be the greatest result, ACLU said. "The young or emotionally less stable students are likely to interpret physical pain as a personal rejection by school officials," the report said. "This in turn tends to produce fear or anxiety and a defensive or rationalizing posture which those same school officials are in a particularly poor position to straighten out. Fear and anxiety, once stirred up in a child are likely to interfere significantly with the learning process and decrease the effectiveness of the teacher-student interaction necessary for learning. Above all, they are blocks to the development of the emotional strength and maturity necessary for eventual self-discipline," ACLU said.

And the aftereffect of corporal punishment can be just as serious, if not more so, in the high schools, where "the young person in the process of becoming an adult is treated like a little child," ACLU said. This breeds "humiliation...greater defensiveness, resentment and hostility.... The adolescent is very likely to become aggressive toward the school, as well as alienated from the adult world and its values, and hostile to them--the exact opposite result from what the school is supposed to achieve."

ACLU cited other harmful effects of administering corporal punishment:

- "In the case of smaller children, harsh treatment of one of their number produces a 'ripple effect' which sends emotional disturbance and anxiety through the whole group....

- "The option of violent bodily punishment is enormously tempting to a frustrated, exasperated or angry teacher or administrator, much more so than any other option, and it can be enormously satisfying to administer. Hence the practice is unavoidably subject to serious abuse.

- "Perhaps the most serious danger of all [is that when] adults administer violent punishment [they] provide young misbehavers and their peers with models of violence, and perhaps also of the discarding of inhibitions against indulging in physical aggression, which undoubtedly contribute to violent tendencies in later life."

Attacking corporal punishment in the schools from a legal standpoint, ACLU said that since a public school is an instrument of the state, punishment meted out in the school "acquires the status of a government act and is, therefore, subject to the restraints of the Constitution." And the Constitution provides "that no one shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of the law," ACLU pointed out. "Implicit in these provisions," ACLU contended, "is the right to bodily integrity, the violation of which must be interpreted as a deprivation of liberty." It must be viewed, ACLU added, as a deterrent to a healthy attitude on the part of a child for both authority and liberty in the years ahead.

Bans on Corporal Punishment Escalate

Reports such as NEA's and ACLU's have acted as catalysts in the escalation of the movement against corporal punishment in the nation's public schools. One offshoot has been the formation of groups like the National Committee To Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools, formed in October 1972 to fight physical punishment both through boards of education and through the courts. One of its co-chairmen is Julian D. Hudson, a Charlottesville, Va., teacher who chaired NEA's Task Force on Corporal Punishment.

Some opponents of physical punishment in the schools want to hit boards of education where it hurts the most--in the pocketbook. In New York, for instance, a national conference on corporal punishment in the schools was held under the joint sponsorship of ACLU and the American Orthopsychiatric Assn., Inc. A major resolution to come out of the conference was one urging the U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) to withhold federal funds from school districts allowing corporal punishment.

Dallas: Corporal Punishment 'Cannot Be Abandoned'

Perhaps nowhere in the nation has the debate over corporal punishment in the schools been more heated than in Dallas, where Supt. Nolan Estes has staunchly defended its use by both teachers and principals. When debate broke

out in January 1970 among board members over a proposed board policy extending to teachers the right to administer corporal punishment, Estes issued his much quoted statement. Several months before the meeting, Dallas teachers had requested the right of administering corporal punishment. The new policy called for in-depth counseling of the student and parental permission before the teacher could strike a student. Prior board policy did not require principals to receive parental permission, but one board member proposed that the new policy cover principals as well.

After heated and emotional discussion on the part of the board, Estes finally said: "I would not want to be a principal of a school if I had to first contact the parent before I could administer, in terms of my best professional judgment, corporal punishment. Neither would I want to be superintendent of schools where this kind of policy was required." The board motion was withdrawn. In the final outcome, principals retained the right of administering corporal punishment without parental permission; teachers must receive the parent's permission first.

Although noting that the reported incidences of corporal punishment quadrupled in one school year (5,358 incidents were reported in 1970-71 compared with 24,305 reported in 1971-72), a Dallas Times Herald editorial cautiously backed the board policy. Calling for a "careful review of paddling practices" in light of the fourfold increase in spankings, the paper contended in its Oct. 11, 1972, issue that "some increase is understandable, because of the general unrest and the rise in disruptions as a result of new desegregation rules."

The Times Herald generally blamed parents for the problem. "Educators certainly would rather use other means to maintain a good climate for learning, but they have to deal with products of a permissive age. ...If parents have

Media Belts Blows from Bullies

Newspapers from coast to coast generally have panned the practice of corporal punishment. A blistering editorial in The New York Times on April 12, 1972, said: "It is difficult to fathom why the administration of premeditated, painful punishment by a bigger and stronger person could instill anything other than the belief that force triumphs." Calling corporal punishment "an atrocious violation of educational principle," the Times charged that it was "appalling" that "youngsters are being taught the efficacy of rule by bully."

In a similar mood, The Los Angeles Times noted that parents testifying before the Los Angeles County Grand Jury in February 1972 charged that children in some schools had been beaten with split baseball bats, rubber hoses, slotted paddles and numerous other objects. "The continued beating of youngsters in the schools borders at times on the criminal," the Times said. The editorial called corporal punishment "that most ineffective and archaic practice, a holdover from the darker ages of education when pupils cowered in terror of a blow to the head or a birch to the posterior."

instilled their children with respect for rules and the rights of others, there is little need to resort to paddling," the paper editorialized. And the Committee To Abolish Corporal Punishment, the paper said, "might spend its time to better advantage if it established a behavioral counseling service to assist troublesome students and their parents in adjusting to school routines."

Estes defended his insistence on corporal punishment as certainly not "the ideal way" to discipline a child, but, he added, "as a matter of practicality, it is the only feasible way to operate." Dallas teachers, he said, "must have the authority to spank," but "only as a last resort and only after careful counseling with the child and parent. ...We agree with [B. F.] Skinner that there are better ways to do it," Estes contended, "but until we have a Utopian society, we will have corporal punishment." And despite the furor in Dallas, most parents and most courts agree with the superintendent.

Where the U.S. Supreme Court Stands

Perhaps the cruelest blow so far to opponents of corporal punishment was dealt by the U.S. Supreme Court in November 1972 when it refused to review a lower court decision upholding corporal punishment in the Dallas schools. The decision put an end, at least for the time being, to change the traditional decisions of the nation's courts to generally uphold the use of corporal punishment in schools.

Almost unanimously, courts have held that barring prohibitory statutes, the teacher, acting in place of the parent, not only is justified in using reasonable physical punishment but also is immune from civil or criminal liability for doing so. It is only where courts have found the punishment to be unreasonable or excessive, or inflicted maliciously, that teachers have found themselves in legal trouble.

Yet, attorneys for Douglas Ware, a Dallas high school student who had been spanked for being late for swimming practice, filed suit against Supt. Nolan Estes, claiming their client's rights to liberty under the Fourteenth Amendment had been violated by punishment without the benefit of due process of law. They were armed with a precedent-setting lower court decision in Massachusetts permanently enjoining the Boston School Committee from inflicting corporal punishment on any student under any circumstances.

But Dist. Court Judge W. M. Taylor dismissed the case, finding the plaintiff's claims that the Fourteenth Amendment had been violated "insubstantial," and finding further that corporal punishment had a reasonable relationship to an educational goal that outweighed any parental right. The Fifth Circuit Court upheld Taylor, and the Supreme Court, in refusing to hear the case, upheld the Circuit Court.

Technically, since it was not a formal decision but only a refusal to review, the Supreme Court action does not set a national precedent. It is binding only in the Fifth Circuit, and merely "persuasive" in the nine other federal circuit courts. Realistically, the action represents a guideline for judicial decisions on corporal punishment for many years to come.

ONE CAUTIOUS SOLUTION: DRUGS

In some educational circles, debates over due process and corporal punishment pale in comparison to arguments about the use of amphetamines on hyperactive children. A majority of educators and doctors, and the federal government, too, continues to approve of the cautious use of drugs to calm overactive children to the point that their energy and motion are contained long enough to allow some classroom concentration.

Yet, skepticism continues to persist.

The widespread use of small doses of amphetamines--called stimulants or "uppers" in the full adult doses--to treat hyperactive youngsters came to public attention in June 1970 when it was revealed that from 5% to 10% of all children in the public elementary schools of Omaha, Neb., were involved in such treatment. Deeper investigation by authorities and the nation's press revealed that up to 500,000 pupils in grades 1-6 throughout the nation were being treated with amphetamines to counteract various hyperactive disorders.

Furious debate was touched off almost immediately. Congress began an investigation through a Right to Privacy Inquiry of the House Governmental Operations Committee. HEW's Office of Child Development convened a blue-ribbon panel of 15 of the nation's top medical scientists and educators to study the problem and to make recommendations for the continued use or disuse of amphetamines on hyperactive children.

The practice actually goes back decades. For many years, medications such as tranquilizers and antidepressants have been used by doctors to treat various disorders in children. Some 30 years ago, the use of stimulant medications was added to the list when doctors found, for a still unexplained reason, that some medications which stimulate adults actually can calm overactive children.

Overactivity in children can be caused by many different factors. The most common factor is the normal ebullience of youth, but one of the most serious is termed "hyperkinetic behavioral disturbance." No one has yet found the cause. The symptoms are a marked increase in physical activity; a marked decrease in the span of attention; and a propensity to fight, yell, run around the room and generally disrupt the educational process.

Most authorities describe the hyperkinetic child as one having an "inner tornado" beyond his control. The child is continually distracted. He races from one interest to another, never focusing on any one interest for more than a brief period of time. In addition, he can be irritable and hostile.

To this, Dr. John E. Peters, a Little Rock, Ark., child psychiatrist, adds: "Those doctors and politicians who say that they're against it because they feel that it is experimenting on children just aren't familiar with the research that has been done."

Amphetamines 'Approved' by AAP

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) agrees with Dr. Peters. In February 1973, the Academy's Committee on Drugs stated: "Children responding to medication promptly and unequivocally exhibit an increased attention span and control over spontaneous motor activity. Omission of a single dose may result in return of hyperactivity. Also, academic and behavioral performance may become more productive because treatment may break the vicious cycle caused by the effects of the disturbing restless, impulsive behavior on the family and on the school situation."

There are no lasting problems from early prescription of amphetamines, the committee said, and no problems of excesses after repeated use. The committee reported: "In a 12-year follow-up study of 340 hyperkinetic patients, no major problems resulting from drug toxicity were found. Similarly, follow-up studies on patients treated during childhood give no indication of increased use of amphetamines or other drugs in later years. In fact, there has been a lack of willful increase in dosage, presumably resulting from the lack of euphoric effects from amphetamines in these patients."

The AAP estimates that the "hyperkinetic syndrome...characterized by motor restlessness, short attention span, poor impulse control, learning difficulties and emotional liability" affects an estimated 3% of grade school children. About 65% of these children, the AAP contends, respond favorably to long-term amphetamine medication.

AAP warns against student use of amphetamines for such purposes as staying awake during exams, losing weight and improving athletic performance. AAP also warns of the misuse of amphetamines by pediatricians who "have had unduly optimistic expectations of theraputic responses for the child with poor school performance, the overweight child, or the teen-ager with mild depression." Generally, AAP says, the use of amphetamines on "carefully selected patients with hyperkinetic problems is a sound way to treat such disorders."

Skepticism of Drug Use Persists

Author-lecturer John Holt, a former elementary school teacher, contends that children with behavior problems are treated with drugs not because it's good for them, but because such children "make it difficult to run our schools as we do, like maximum security prisons, for the comfort and convenience of teachers and administrators who work in them."

Dr. Helen Gofman, director of the child study unit at the U. of California Medical Center, cautions against the use of stimulants for hyperactive children. "Medication isn't always the answer," she says, advising that "merely talking to the parents of the child" many times is the best treatment.

Calming the Hyperactive Child

One of the most commonly used drugs to calm hyperactivity in children is Ritalin, a powerful stimulant whose effects are like those of amphetamines or "pep pills." Yet, contrary to its stimulating effects in adults, it has a calming and quieting effect on hyperkinetic children. The pros and cons of its use, however, are many.

Testifying before the House Governmental Operations Committee, Thomas C. Points, a former deputy assistant secretary of HEW, said the use of such drugs produces no euphoria in youngsters and there is no evidence to suggest that the drugs are addicting in children.

Sally R. Williams, a past president of NEA's Dept. of School Nurses, also strongly defended the use of amphetamines, contending that "we school nurses have seen the value of this type of treatment for selected pupils." She described a typical hyperactive child:

> This child was extremely hyperactive, as though he had "springs inside"; he had a very short attention span, could not write his full name on the paper; responded actively to every motion, grunt, sigh or shuffle of the other children in the classroom. He had no impulse control and upon impulse acted immediately, thus placing himself in frequent situations where he (was) in danger to himself and other pupils.

Mrs. Williams testified that "the literature is filled with documented case studies" showing that such pupils, carefully identified by psychological and medical evaluation, have been significantly helped by amphetamines and Ritalin. "We do have a serious problem of drug abuse among our children and youth," she concluded, "but we must not allow those problems to jeopardize the effective treatment of one segment of our pupil population."

Dr. Barbara Fish, professor of child psychiatry at the New York U. School of Medicine, agreed. She contended, however, that "sensationalism in the press" has frightened some parents to such an extent that they would not accept the prescription by their physicians of amphetamine treatment for hyperkinetic children. The problem, she said, is that frequently too little medical help is available for overactive children, rather than too much. She urged "early detection, evaluation and treatment" of hyperactive children, "so we don't get fifth graders referred to us for help that they should have gotten in the first grade."

Dr. Leon Oettinger Jr., a noted San Marino, Calif., pediatrician who specializes in childhood learning problems, contends that amphetamines and similar drugs are "probably the safest ever discovered by man, when used in medical dosages." He says he has given amphetamines to more than 2,000 young patients over the past 23 years and "never had a problem with abuse." Dr. James Satterfield, director of the Gateway Hospital Hyperactive Children's Clinic in Los Angeles, scoffs at critics, contending that such drugs are prescribed carefully by doctors and that nowhere do medically unqualified persons, including teachers and school administrators, have the legal right to administer medication to children.

Bert Donaldson, director of programs for emotionally disturbed children for the Michigan State Dept. of Education, charges that amphetamines are sometimes used to quiet children whose only real problem is being "bored to death in their classes," adding: "If teachers would challenge these children as far as their intellects would go, many would straighten up." Donaldson acknowledges that Ritalin may be "the greatest thing on earth" for students with accurately diagnosed hyperactivity problems, but he questions the number of children placed on such medication.

So does Arnold Arnold, consultant on baby and child care and author of the book, Your Child and You. Arnold contended that while as many as 840,000 elementary school children across the country (three out of every ten) fall into the hyperactive category, only a very small number of these actually suffer from brain dysfunction or damage. Furthermore, he said, only a small number of these respond favorably to amphetamines. Yet, even after nationwide publicity and Congressional investigation, somewhere between 150,000 to 300,000 children are being given amphetamines "and the movement to prescribe them widely for a variety of classroom behavior problems is gathering momentum in many states and cities," Arnold said.

Arnold also criticized the diagnostic process leading up to the prescription of amphetamines: "Certainly, every child believed to suffer minimal brain dysfunction should be carefully examined by a team of qualified medical specialists that must include a pediatric neurologist. Yet, there are only 100 of these in the whole United States. Presently such diagnoses are most often made by ordinary pediatricians, by psychologists and by general practitioners who are not able to give the required tests or make the proper medical judgments." And, he adds, there is a "prevalent myth" among teachers and psychologists "that has caused amphetamines or Ritalin to be commonly and irresponsibly prescribed" as a "cure" for all kinds of ailments, including reading problems.

Another critic is former Congressman Cornelius Gallagher, D-N.J., who conducted the Right to Privacy Inquiry. At one point in the hearings he suggested that schoolchildren were being used as "guinea pigs in a grotesque psychological game of chance." And he admonished a Little Rock, Ark., doctor, John E. Peters, who admitted that he had prescribed Tofranil, one of two amphetamine-type behavior modification drugs (the other is Aventyl) which the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) later warned physicians not to use. "That's one of the great concerns about the use of these drugs," Gallagher said. "You are using drugs that the FDA says are dangerous and you didn't even know the drugs were dangerous. We should suspend the use of these drugs for this purpose until more is known."

HEW Study Recommends 'Judicious' Use of Drugs

The final word, so far, belongs to the 15 experts who comprised the HEW study team. Their recommendation consists of a cautious green light to the careful treatment of hyperactive children with amphetamines. In a 17-page, 1971 Report of the Conference on the Use of Stimulant Drugs in the Treatment of Behaviorally Disturbed Young School Children, the experts said if such factors as careful diagnosis by a doctor, close supervision of treatment,

and parental consent and cooperation were part of the process, they approved of the use of amphetamines for youngsters suffering hyperkinetic disorders. They hit hard at the need for parental consent, saying: "The consent of the patient and his parents or guardian must be obtained for treatment. Under no circumstances should any attempt be made to coerce parents to accept any particular treatment."

The report said it was proper "for school personnel to inform parents of the child's behavior problems, but members of the school staff should not directly diagnose the hyperkinetic disturbance or prescribe treatment." The school "should initiate contact with a physician only with the parents' consent," the panel added.

More Cautions Urged

The HEW panel also scotched the contention that the condition is more prevalent in black children than white: Hyperkinetic disorders "are found in children of all socioeconomic groups and in countries throughout the world." The panel also warned that hyperkinetic disorders should not be confused with the normal problems of youth, contending that inattention and restlessness in class could be caused "by hunger, poor teaching, overcrowded classrooms, or lack of understanding by teachers or parents." Above all, the report warned, "the normal ebullience of childhood should not be confused with the very special problems of the child with hyperkinetic behavior disorders."

Noting that there is no single all-inclusive diagnostic test for these types of problems, the panel counseled that "adequate diagnosis may require the use not only of medical, but of specific pyschological, educational and social resources." The panel also said that even if hyperkinetic problems are properly diagnosed, amphetamines aren't always effective. Only one-half to two-thirds of the children suffering from such disorders are actually helped by the drugs, the report said. It also stated that the effectiveness of amphetamines can be determined quickly--sometimes in a few days to a few weeks. The report drew other conclusions important to school staff and parents:

- Amphetamines don't "cure" hyperkinesis, but merely make the child more accessible to teachers and counselors.
- The use of such drugs should be discontinued after age 11 or 12.
- Amphetamines don't suppress the child's initiative to learn, although they suppress erratic behavior.
- The child can modulate and organize his activities in the direction he wishes, when the medication is effective. "The stimulant does not slow down or suppress the hyperkinetic child in the exercise of his initiative. Nor does it 'pep him up,' or make him feel high, overstimulated, or out of touch with his environment."
- Stimulants "appear to mobilize and to increase the child's abilities to focus and to organize his bodily movements more purposefully."

Finally, the panel stated forcefully that "exaggerated alarm" over the use of amphetamines on children "can threaten the availability of medical resources for those who critically need it," adding that "this has happened before...and it can take years to repair the damage."

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR TEACHERS

"Teaching might be fun if it weren't for the kids."

--Anonymous

The words are those of a beginning teacher--a very frustrated beginning teacher. The identity is irrelevant. Similar laments have been uttered by teachers from New York to Oshkosh, from Los Angeles to Topeka, perhaps at one time or another in just about every school district across the country. The words decry a common problem: discipline.

And the problem is, by no means, reserved for beginners. Marguerite Pearce Metcalf, a teacher at Parkview High School, Little Rock, Ark., contended: "Discipline is one of the most serious problems the beginning teacher faces. But if it is any comfort to the novice, experienced teachers often find it baffling, too."

Any teacher--particularly a beginning teacher--"must begin her understanding and implementation of discipline with herself," the Little Rock teacher said. Teachers must establish a "professional philosophy" of "preparation, respect and dedication," and teachers must be totally prepared, putting together each assignment "with methodical precision and a touch of personal creativity.... When students recognize proficiency of a teacher and her competency in the subject, half of the battle for disciplined classes is won," the Little Rock teacher said.

Furthermore, a teacher must "treat each student, regardless of age, as she would treat an adult." If this can be accomplished, she said, "solid rapport is in the offing." And, if in addition to competency and respect, the teacher can demonstrate dedication, students will be "quick to sense it, easily influenced by it, and their behavior altered by it," the teacher said.

Yet, even after adopting such basic and sound philosophies as these, many educators point out, the goal of achieving proper classroom discipline is still frustrating, complex and usually hard to achieve. And one of the complexities involved is recognizing the differences in the makeup of each individual youngster in the classroom, and of the teacher, too.

"It is important for all teachers to understand that a child's behavior is determined by the notions he holds about himself: who he is, how well he likes himself, where he is going," said Maida L. Riggs, associate professor of physical education, U. of Massachusetts. "This is no less true for teachers. And how are these notions established? By experimenting and exploring, probing and protecting, trying and testing, discovering and discarding."

Nevertheless, despite its complexities, its frustrations and its many varied problems, discipline in the classroom is seen as an absolute essential to learning. The phrase most often used by teacher trainers and by teachers themselves is simply: "While good disciplinarians are not always good teachers, good teachers are always good disciplinarians."

Many students themselves support such a statement. In a 1970 "Youthpoll" sponsored by the American College Testing Program, college-bound students across the nation agreed that their "best" teachers were those who were "demanding" and "caring," and their "worst" teachers were those who were either soft on discipline or on marks. The results, How Students Rate Their Schools and Teachers, published in 1971 by the National Assn. of Secondary School Principals, indicate students consistently rated as their best teachers the ones who worked them the hardest. The majority of the students interviewed said discipline is desirable and order in the classroom is necessary to give them the opportunity to learn.

Good Disciplinarian: 'Firm, Fair, Friendly'

The words "firm, fair and friendly" are the keys to better discipline in the classroom, according to Alvin W. Howard, associate professor of the college of education, U. of New Mexico. Howard, a former elementary and junior high school teacher, counselor and principal, said: "Good discipline does not result if a teacher adopts an inflexible, punitive approach, or if he is too permissive, pretending that annoying behavior does not exist."

But firmness does not imply "rigid domination of children, nor does it require snarling and growling at them to cow them into submission.... Authoritarianism breeds resentment," Howard contended. "Most children have a keen sense of fair play. If a pupil does something wrong, he expects to bear the consequences, but he also expects anyone else who commits the same offense to receive the same treatment."

Warren William Bell, a counselor at Parkway School District, St. Louis, Mo., sees proper discipline as a means toward "developing within the student a sense of good judgment consistent with a desirable system of values leading to proper self-control and self-direction. One would think," he said, "that this aspect of teaching would be thoroughly covered in college and university education courses, but that is not always the case. Many times it is covered superficially, and too often the beginning teacher finds that the theory that was stressed in college does not work when put into practice."

What Teachers Should Do

Educators generally agree that "what works for one teacher may not work for another." But they also agree that certain general guidelines must be followed by all teachers if they are to effect positive discipline in the classroom. Among those most often mentioned are the following:

- A teacher should be fair at all times, especially if he expects similar treatment from the students. Consistency is mandatory.

- A teacher should be understanding, friendly, tolerant and sincere. Efforts to be "one of the gang" will seldom be successful, but an atmosphere of mutual respect will.

- A teacher should remember that every student in his class wants to be successful, particularly those with a record of failure. A teacher must always accentuate the positive.

- A teacher should be thoroughly prepared in his assignment at all times.

- A teacher should keep an orderly, attractive and cheerful classroom. Those same qualities apply to him, too.

- A teacher should be enthusiastic and courteous and, above all, maintain a sense of humor.

- A teacher should learn to know each and every student in the class, including prior records, his likes and dislikes, his problems, his temperament; anything that will improve communications with the pupil.

- A teacher should change the routine occasionally; do something exciting with the students now and then; ask them for ideas.

- A teacher should be able to admit to an error and to apologize if he has treated a pupil unjustly.

- A teacher should let students know he cares.

- A teacher should establish a minimum number of rules and even these should be kept as simple as possible.

- A teacher should make sure the punishment fits the misdeed. And a student must be told the reason he is being punished.

- A teacher should be patient.

- A teacher should be thick-skinned.

What Teachers Should Not Do

Educators agree that there are plenty of "don'ts"--if a teacher is to cope with the problem of discipline. Among them are the following:

- A teacher should never get into a "do it or else" situation.

- A teacher should never punish the entire class for the actions of a few. The innocents will harbor resentment; disrupters will gain recruits.

- A teacher should never make study or homework a punishment.

- A teacher should avoid arguing with students. A temporary victory in putting a pupil down is rarely a "win" in the long run.

- A teacher should not try to do the impossible. Some pupils have emotional problems that only a psychologist, psychiatrist or an agency which provides such services can solve.

- A teacher should never humiliate a child. Ridiculing a youngster in front of his peers not only will turn the student against the teacher, but more than likely will turn his peers against the teacher, too.

- A teacher should not strong-arm students. If corporal punishment "must" be used, it should be done only as a last resort, without malice and only in the manner prescribed by school district policies.

- A teacher should not refuse to consider mitigating circumstances.

- A teacher should not overburden children with demands beyond their ability.

- A teacher should not revoke a previously granted privilege until the child understands why.

- A teacher should not insist that a child "confess" wrongdoing.

- A teacher should not compare one student with another. Attempts to improve a child's behavior by comparing him with a less troublesome child make the child resent his better-behaved peer.

- A teacher should not challenge children. "The next person I catch throwing something will stay after school" usually means that someone will try it and risk punishment.

- A teacher should not harp on small imperfections and minor infractions.

Good Teachers Let Themselves Go—With Their Funk And Wagnalls

"A good teacher never gets angry." Right? No, that's wrong, according to Haim Ginott, adjunct professor of psychology at New York U. Ginott admits that the realities of teaching make anger inevitable. Yet, he says, many teachers "confess feeling guilty about being angry."

"An effective teacher is neither a masochist nor a martyr," Ginott says in Teacher and Child. Instead of trying to cover up, he advises, a good teacher should use his anger to his advantage. "When teachers are angry, children are attentive."

Angry teachers, Ginott advises, can be "uncomfortable, displeased, annoyed, irked, irritated, frustrated, aggravated, exasperated, livid, provoked, incensed, indignant, aghast, irate, angry, mad, furious and enraged. They can be full of consternation, ire and acrimony. Communication between teacher and child," Ginott says, "depends on learning to express nuances of anger without nuances of insult." An angry teacher needn't say, "You are a pest," or "You are so stupid." He says, "I am annoyed," "I am furious." The student gets the point.

PARENTS: DISCIPLINE BEGINS AT HOME

Obviously, "there is no such thing as a perfect parent," concluded The Christian Science Monitor after a year-long investigation of children in trouble. "Lapses in discipline, affection and interest occur in the best of homes." And, fortunately, "children are highly resilient and usually shake off minor parental mistakes." But there are far too many "extreme parental abuses" that turn uncountable numbers of children into juvenile delinquents, causing what amounts to "a national scandal," the Monitor said.

After the extensive study, based on hundreds of interviews with both children and experts on their behavior, the Monitor said: "Most of those who work with children in trouble are convinced that these youngsters...are products of their environment. Their unacceptable behavior is 'learned.'" And in this learning process, the investigators reported, "the parents are the first teachers." Peer groups, the environment, teachers and policemen all contribute to the process, the Monitor said, "but the parents usually set the mold, either through action or inaction."

Just about the biggest problem uncovered was one of "self-image." "Most children in trouble have an extremely poor self-image. Too often their parents are 'losers,' unable to make a marriage go, unsuccessful in business, or are alcoholics, emotionally unstable or have other problems," the Monitor said. And instead of trying to deal openly and appropriately with the problem of potential delinquency, the study reported, "parents cry, nag, bluster, call the child a 'dummy' or worse, and generally undermine the child's self-concept. As a result, troubled youngsters find it nearly impossible to communicate their feelings in a normal way to adults." And their "retaliatory tactics of running away, striking out violently, giving up in school and engaging in other unacceptable forms of behavior," the paper reported, "may simply be ways of saying, 'Care about me.'"

What Can Parents Do?

How is a parent to deal with this potentially explosive situation, particularly if the problem of discipline or delinquency has already begun to emerge in the home? Most experts agree that the answer is to seek help. And the first place to seek help is at the local school level. A child's teacher, counselor and principal can be of invaluable help to a parent.

Schools and school districts have many varied ways of working with parents above and beyond the traditional Parent Teachers Assn. (PTA) relationship. Some of these are detailed on the following page:

Brookfield, Ill.: The guidelines of the LaGrange Park Schools in Brookfield, Ill., state flatly: "The ultimate responsibility for children's behavior rests with parents. It is expected that the parents will accept the following responsibilities...." The responsibilities listed include supporting school discipline rules, sending pupils to school in the proper state of health, cleanliness and neatness; maintaining an "active interest" in the pupil's daily work; making sure homework is done properly; and cooperating with the school by signing and returning pertinent communications and attending parent-teacher conference sessions.

Washington, D.C.: The Giddings Elementary School, Washington, D.C., set up a discipline system based entirely on cooperation with parents. The school formed a Parents Action Discipline Committee, composed of 11 parents, which meets at the school and handles all problems arising from classroom behavior. Misbehaving children are brought before the committee so they can tell their side of the story. Minor problems are dealt with on the spot. More serious problems involve parental conferences. Again, the most important component of this type of program is the cooperation it fosters between parent and school.

Kalamazoo, Mich.: If a discipline problem is of such magnitude that it cannot be handled satisfactorily by the school, one solution is to direct the parents to the proper agency for help. In Kalamazoo, Mich., one such agency offering this type of service is called "Children's Charter." The family makes its initial contact with the agency through school counselors. Volunteers are sent by the agency into the homes of parents with problem children. They offer counsel and assistance to the family as it works out its problem.

Nashville, Tenn.: The Regional Intervention Program in Nashville, Tenn., enables parents to teach other parents the proper techniques of managing children with severe behavior problems. Through the program, parents are taught to overcome or to avert such behavior problems in young children. Reporting on the unusual program in American Education, writer Reginald Stuart says: "Experience has demonstrated that the mothers are far more effective than the pros" in dealing with their own children, once they learn the proper techniques. The techniques used at the Nashville Center basically involve behavior modification: praising a child when he is good, ignoring him when he is bad. "The trick is to teach parents how to put that proposition into practice," Stuart writes.

Program director John Ora, using a small staff of teachers-in-training and parents who already have been through the program, works with individual parents and their children to diagnose problems through daily observation at the center. Slowly, through the use of behavior modification, normal behavior patterns are returned to the children. One parent, Mrs. Helen Blackmore, told of her experience before entering the program with her son, Ronny, 4: "Things got so bad that none of the other children in the neighborhood would have anything to do with Ronny because of his bad temper, and our life at home was a kind of hell." Says Mrs. Luverne Hallman, who successfully completed the program with her son, Artie, 19 months: "I reached the point where I had thought about just getting in the car and driving down the highway and not coming back."

Behavior Contracts: The Proponents' View

Still another avenue of approach for the harried parent is, of course, with the child himself. And one particular project gaining favor with some psychologists is the behavior contract between the parent and the child. Both agree to changes not only in the child's behavior but in parental practices, too. The contract usually specifies certain rewards--particularly for the child, if his end of the contract is carried out.

Such an approach has been undertaken by the Family and School Consultation Project at the U. of Michigan. Project director Richard Stuart explained that the behavior contract between parent and child offers an effective and rational means of changing inappropriate and unacceptable behavior without labeling the misbehaving child. Attempts to help more than 120 troubled children have brought positive results, Stuart said.

A controversial aspect to the behavior contract is that of rewarding the child whenever he is good. The toughest job, Stuart said, is convincing parents that they have to start making good behavior pay off for the youngsters by rewards--no matter how minor or insignificant--in the form of notice, praise, a happy hug or an occasional treat. Parents tend to harp on the negative, to regard rewarding good behavior as bribery, Stuart said. They do not easily accept the idea that they are actually reinforcing bad behavior when they focus their attention on it by chastizing the child, he added. Parents also must remember that a child who commands attention by cutting up at home and school gets a powerful and potentially dangerous ego-boost from other children, who tend to reward wrong doers with admiration and awe.

But once parents agree to reverse their field and become as aware of the child's good points as they are of his bad, Stuart said, they can take the next step of joining with the child to identify specific goals they have for each other, and then writing a behavior contract to achieve those goals.

In the Modesto, Calif., schools, a behavior contract is signed by the student, his teacher, his counselor, his principal and his parents. Everyone agrees that if the student disrupts the classroom, endangers the health or safety of others, or causes needless damage to school property, he will be in violation of the contract. Three violations mean an automatic three-day suspension. It's not so much the punishment involved that seems to make the contract arrangement work, educators report, but the contract's stress on the importance of proper discipline in the process of quality education. Although most school systems don't go as far as the contract approach, many publish guidelines for parents, just as they do for students, teachers and administrators.

Behavior Contracts: The Opponents' View

Not all experts who work with parents and children agree on the reward approach to good behavior. Two experts who do not are Dr. Rudolph Dreikurs, professor of psychiatry, Chicago Medical School, and director of the Alfred Adler Institute in Chicago, and Vicki Soltz, a registered nurse who studied under Dreikurs. In their book, Children: The Challenge, they agree that

the ideal parent-child relationship is one of "mutual respect and cooperation," but they disagree with behavioral scientists that rewarding children is the way to get that kind of relationship. "Rewarding children for good behavior," the authors say, "can be almost as bad psychologically as punishing them. Such behavior indicates the same lack of respect. We 'reward' our inferiors for doing what we want. In a system of mutual respect among equals, people do a job because it needs doing. Paying children for doing their part...keeps foremost in each child's mind, 'What's in it for me?'

"Parents who set up a system of rewards," the authors say, "give youngsters the idea that they needn't do anything unless they receive something specific by way of return. Children have great difficulty developing a sense of responsibility under these circumstances. Contrary to most thinking, praise fails to give the child a sense of belonging. It tends, in fact, to lead him in the wrong direction. He learns to do what has to be done in order to win praise rather than to contribute. A reward system establishes false values, since a youngster assumes that the world should repay his every effort."

Yet, the two authors warn, punishment is not the answer, either. Some youngsters, they say, purposely invite punishment by being bad. "This attitude leads to a mighty struggle for power. Some children...make terrifying efforts to demonstrate their own power, even if their victory consists of having their parents show defeat by losing their temper and hitting them.... Such a process, the two authors say, may soon get to the point where the punished child "becomes a bully and a tyrant, finding his only satisfaction in revenge--in hurting others as he feels hurt by them."

Needed: 'A Firm Sense of Order'

Yet, while some experts in bringing up children disagree on how best to get the job done, most do agree that establishing a firm sense of order is necessary. Doris Grace, a teacher, mother and writer for PTA Magazine, calls it "putting your foot down." Like when Johnny wants to watch TV even when his homework isn't done. There's certainly room for occasional flexibility, Mrs. Grace contends, but most of the time you've simply got to "put your foot down and keep it down. 'No homework, no TV.'"

Psychologist Fritz Redl calls it "setting limits." The parent "who abdicates authority, has failed his child," he says. "More often than many mothers and fathers realize, a child is asking to have limits set for his behavior. He may ask, 'What time shall I come home?' and then protest the decision, but he wants the limitation.... The crucial question," Redl says, "is how to set limits for a child without limiting the child's development....

"It is not the kind of achievement that occurs by lurching from one crisis to another.... It begins with the parents' wish to teach the child how he fits into the world--that there are things he may do and things he may not do; that he has rights, and that other persons have their rights as well; that taboos, requirements and privileges vary from situation to situation, from place to place, from age to age. Most important," Redl says, "the child must feel that parental discipline reflects concern for his best interests, that his parents' acts express their genuine wish for him to grow up in fulfillment."

WRAP-UP: WHAT'S HAPPENING ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Striking contrasts and a wide range of variations in school discipline procedures and practices are evident in schools across the country. An Education U.S.A. Special Report survey, answered by over 400 schools and districts, revealed that the district's size or its location seems to bear on whether it has a formally drawn discipline code, the type of student action or inaction that merits disciplinary procedures, and even who, among the school staff, makes the decision on why, when and how to apply a disciplinary procedure. This is not always so, however. Some schools of only 400 students have clearly defined guidelines; some districts of 25,000 do not.

The majority of the respondents (249) said they have a formal policy on discipline; 162 said they do not. In response to the question, "Who helped prepare the policy?" some districts indicated the policy was decided by the board of education; others involved one or any combination of the following groups: students, parents, teachers, the principal, the school psychologist.

In the absence of a formally drawn policy, most schools indicated they were guided by some type of basic school philosophy. One Montana principal of a 4,000-pupil district answered: "Basically we expect ladylike and gentlemanly conduct. Students are expelled from school after continued insubordination or failure to conduct themselves as to the expectations of the principals." This view is also reflected in the answer from a school district in Washington State: [Our school disciplinary policy is determined by] "the good judgment of our administrators; a deep sense of concern for students; a commitment of fairness to all." The administrator of a 25,000-student, multicounty system indicated that although no formal policy has been adopted, a variety of informal policies are in effect--each determined by the local administrator.

One administrator of a 2,600-student district admitted he followed no officially sanctioned guidelines, but that the district's informal procedures resulted from the "indirect influence of the U.S. courts." Each teacher and school is expected to handle its own problems, he pointed out, but if a difficult case arises, the line of authority is clearly established: the teacher refers problems to the principal, the principal to the superintendent. The board of education makes the final decision on any disciplinary problems. Further reflecting an awareness of possible problems regarding due process procedures, the principal noted that "all suspensions must be documented."

How often are school discipline codes reviewed? One district said "monthly"; many districts stick to an annual review policy. One principal noted that his district's code was "still in draft form," but that final adoption on the fourth go-round seemed imminent. Some districts with newly

approved guidelines reported they expect to revise them, after at least a year's experience to point up possible pitfalls. Another type of review--of actual administration of the discipline policy--does not take place in many districts. When respondents were asked if any checks were made on teachers and principals to determine if the discipline policy was being equitably enforced, 248 said no; 137, yes. Possible consequences to the teacher for being in noncompliance with the school district policy on discipline range from "no action if violated" to probation, reprimand or nonrenewal of a teacher's contract.

What Warrants 'Extreme' Disciplinary Measures?

The type of behavior that warrants "extreme disciplinary measures" varies from district to district, according to the responses to the Education U.S.A. Special Report survey. Some administrators who "think they've got problems" might change their minds when faced with those of another district. "Just seeing some of the big problems faced by another district made me aware of how much we were overemphasizing picky, little rules," said one educator.

Following, then, is a listing of student behaviors subject to "extreme" measures, as rated by responding schools and school districts (the number of schools making the response appears in parentheses):

- Possession or use of drugs on school grounds or at school events (106)
- Insubordination or disrespect (99)
- Physical assault on teachers, students, or school employes (94)
- Vandalism (94)
- Possession or use of alcohol on school grounds or at school events (85)
- Truancy (84)
- Smoking on school grounds or at school activities (81)
- Fighting (58)
- Theft (47)
- Disobedience (45)
- Continual disruptive misbehavior in class (37)
- Profanity, obscenity (32)
- Storing, possessing, carrying dangerous weapons (20)
- Behavior which endangers another or impinges on another's rights (18)
- Continual or excessive cutting of classes (17)
- Selling, supplying, distributing drugs on school grounds (15)
- Continual unexcused absenteeism (12)
- Intimidation (10)
- Extortion (8)
- Immorality (8)
- Acts of violence (8)
- Continual excessive tardiness (8)
- Verbal abuse (8)
- Cheating (8)
- Vulgarity (7)
- Forgery (5)
- Arson (5)
- Participating in, instigating a riot (4)
- Incorrigibility (4)
- Off school grounds without permission (4)
- Continual disruptive misbehavior on bus (4)
- Walkouts (3)
- Gambling (3)
- Continual infraction of any school law (3)
- Lying (2)

Eight of the respondents reported they had no "problem" warranting "extreme" disciplinary measures.

Throw a Snowball and You're Out!

"Throwing snowballs" is a student behavior that warrants "extreme disciplinary measures," according to one respondent to the Education U.S.A. Special Report survey. The punishment cited by the district was possible suspension from school. Other infractions listed by public and private schools as meriting extreme measures included: "marking teachers' homes"; turning in a false alarm; "temper tantrums"; sexual perversion; failing two or more subjects at the end of the school year (automatic expulsion); exploding firecrackers; pregnancy; "poor response to teacher direction"; dress extremes; "any action socially unacceptable based on local area mores"; scandal; "a generally negative attitude to school community"; hazing; "filthy or vicious habits"; unauthorized literature.

The Use of Corporal Punishment

On the question of the use of corporal punishment, 237 districts replied that they do permit its use; 164 do not. Several districts expressed concern that the punishment be "reasonable" in relation to the misdeed. Others said corporal punishment should be used "only as a last resort" or "only in extreme cases and, even then, under supervision."

While one district restricted corporal punishment to students in grades 6 and above, another said it was used only on students in grades K-6. One allowed corporal punishment for boys but not for girls. Exactly where and how to administer corporal punishment is specifically spelled out by several districts. Depending on the district, teachers are variously advised that corporal punishment should not do bodily harm; that it should not be administered in the presence of other students; that it should be done only with a paddle on the buttocks by a principal; that it should not be administered to the face or head; that a formal report must be filed with the principal or superintendent.

Other Disciplinary Measures

Some school districts have found their own means of doling out punishment for infractions of disciplinary rules in addition to or in place of corporal punishment, suspension or expulsion. Generally, the procedures they follow can be broken down into three areas: dealing with the student in a positive manner, involving parents in disciplinary procedures, and "alternate" solutions.

Dealing with the student in a positive manner

- Behavior modification techniques, such as behavior contracts.
- Allowing the student to "speak his piece" and air his gripes.
- Replacing punishment with "understanding."
- Working out with the student, not for him, a "reasonable punishment."
- Allowing students more participation in school affairs.
- Seeking "professional" help for the student.
- Helping teachers to establish rapport with students.
- Being consistent in administering disciplinary action.
- Counseling rather than punishment.

Involving parents in disciplinary procedures

- Conducting parent conferences at school or having teachers visit student's home.
- Sending the student home for the balance of the day.
- Sending the student home with the stipulation that he can return to school only when accompanied by his parents.
- Requiring the parents to sign an agreement specifying their cooperation with the school in working out a suitable disciplinary program for the student.

Alternate solutions

- Withdrawal of student's privileges, e.g., attendance and participation in extracurricular activities.
- Detention--after school, before school starts in the morning, or on Saturday morning.
- "Fresh air class," described by the eight districts that said they used this method as a means to channel student energies into constructive activities. Examples cited included clean-up crews for the school grounds or janitorial assignments. Students work on their own time, usually Saturdays.
- Isolating students from peer group.
- Using a demerit system which results in loss of privileges.
- Enforcing "a percentage loss on grades for unexcused absences."
- Requiring students to repair or replace damaged items.
- Requiring boys who get into a fight to "run" for one gym period. The school principal using this method said he felt that "excess energy causes fights."
- Forcing the student to make a decision about whether he wishes to remain in school. If the student decides to stay, he agrees to follow a behavior contract.
- Sending the student to a rehabilitation center, where he must still keep up with his regular class assignments, but where he also receives guidance and counseling from the center staff.

The School Board's Role: Support and Responsibility

Boards of education have "a distance to go" in assisting school districts with the implementation and maintenance of adequate disciplinary procedures, according to Supt. Robert L. Chisholm of Arlington County, Va. Chisholm told the 1973 convention of the American Assn. of School Administrators that school boards must:

- Thoroughly and systematically review and assess existing policies and administrative regulations. (Legal counsel is a must.)
- Support allocation of resources for building-level programs to assist teachers and principals with behavior and control.
- Support human relations programs for all school staff.
- Weigh carefully alternative forms of education, particularly for students at the secondary level.
- Establish good relations and working programs with law enforcement groups with the aim of influencing student attitudes toward law.

Education U.S.A. Special Reports

School Volunteers: Districts Recruit Aides To Meet Rising Costs, Student Needs. Benefits and drawbacks. How to start a program. How to recruit, train and utilize volunteers. Lists of proven activities. Studies of successful programs. 1973, 64 pp., #411-13443. $4.75.

School Lunch Breakthrough: Politics, Technology Spur Expansion of Food Programs. Details on new food delivery systems and new food technology enabling schools to feed more hungry children. Controversy between Congress and the Dept. of Agriculture. 1972, 64 pp., #411-13441. $4.75.

Informal Education: 'Open' Classroom' Provokes Change, Controversy. How informal education differs from traditional education. How effective it is. Theories of child development from which it grew. Many varieties. 1972, 60 pp., #411-13439. $4.75.

Alternative Schools: Pioneering Districts Create Options for Students. The wide variety of alternatives offered, their achievements, problems, pitfalls. How they are financed. Steps toward starting one. 1972, 64 pp., #411-13437. $4.75.

IGE: Individually Guided Education and the Multiunit School. Describes a new form of school organization under which an elementary, middle or high school can incorporate all kinds of innovative methods and strategies. How it works. 1972, 56 pp., #411-13435. $4.75.

Dropouts: Prevention and Rehabilitation—Schools Rescue Potential Failures. Focuses on adaptable programs which appear to be yielding results. 1972, 56 pp., #411-13433. $4.75.

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